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POEMS
BY

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13

P O E M S

BY

STUART STERNE.

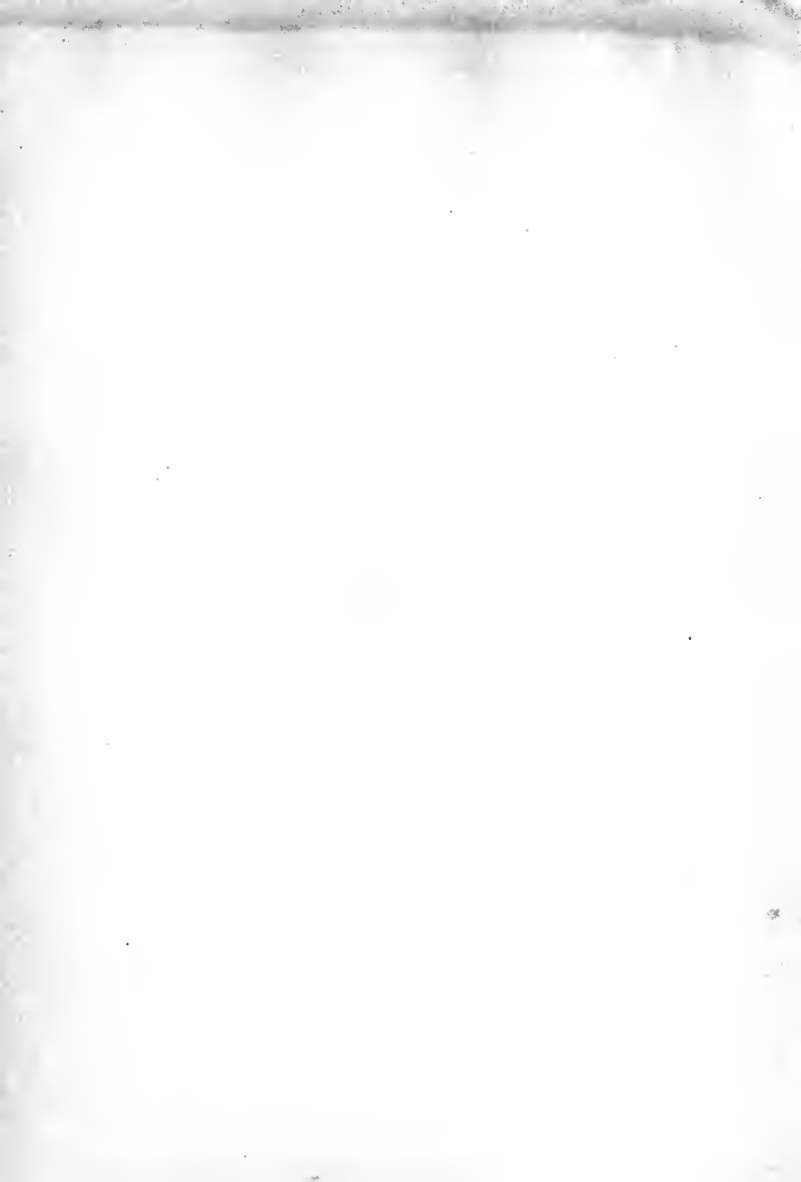


(Published for the Author.)

F. B. PATTERSON,

61 Liberty St., New York.

1874.



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B62/A17

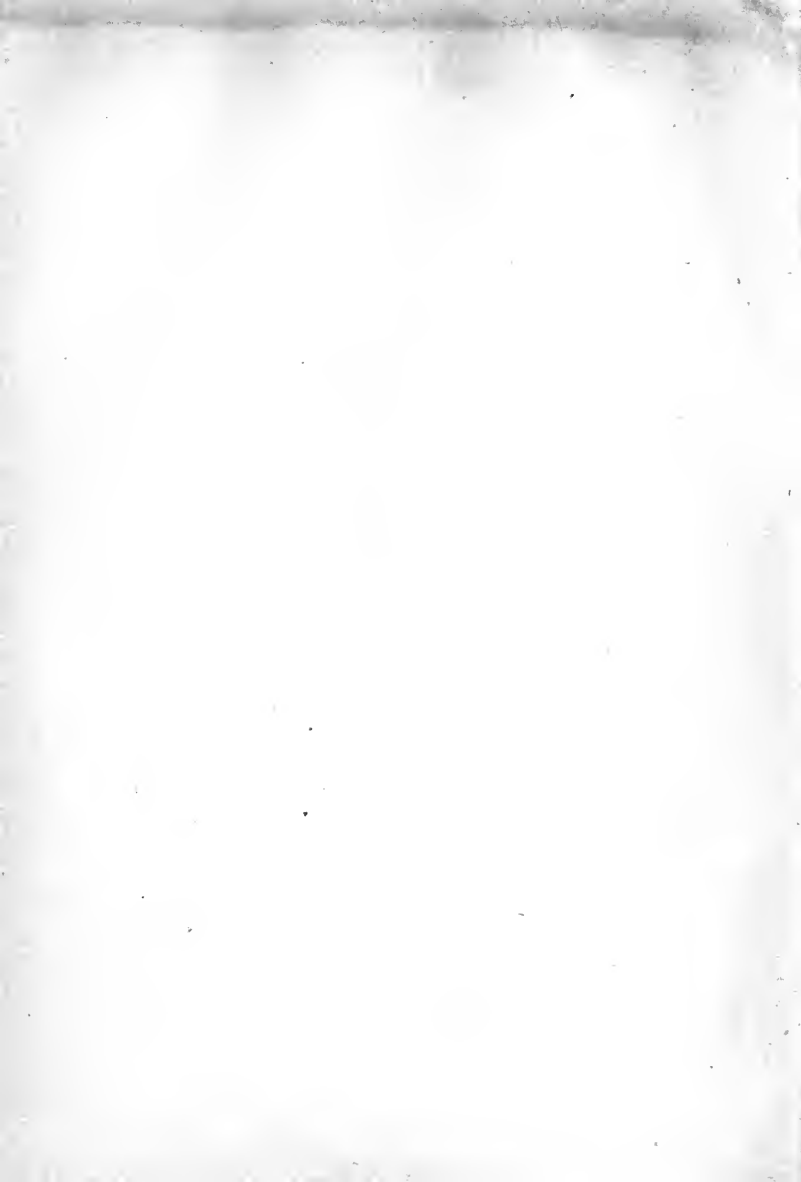
Blake, G

TO MY MOTHER.

HER CHILD.

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EARLIER POEMS.

I. TO C. S. IN LIFE.

II. MISCELLANEOUS.

To C. S. In Life.

LET all the world proclaim thy deeds,
 And every clime thy fame,
 And thousand humble, lowly lips
 Grow prouder with thy name.

My tongue is mute, and utters not,
 Nor praise of thee, nor pride,—
 My heart was long laid at thy feet,
 I can give naught beside.—

I wandered on in the desert of life,
 Crying to Thee, Lord, above,
 For a drop of pure water for my soul,
 A word from him I love!—

I cried for a drop from the fountain of love,
 In passionate struggle and strife,—
 And Thou gavest me the shining pearl of fame,
 In the burning desert of life!—

WOULD that love's sun were set,
 With it the thrill of pain,—
 Would it were set to rise
 Never again!

Never again to fling
 Glory o'er land and sea,—
 Leave me in starless night,
 Wretched and free!—

MINE eyes grow weary, love,
 When never thine they meet,
 When never set towards thee,
 Weary my feet!

My hand grows weary, love,
 Toiling on quite alone,
 When never clasped in love,
 Fast in thine own!

My head grows weary, love,
 When it may never rest,
 There where I long to fly,
 Close to thy breast!

My heart grows weary, love,
 Throbbing fore'er in pain,
 Waiting thy answer, love,
 Ever in vain.

THINK not, O love, that I shall ever ask,
 To be thy darling wife!
 But let my soul go with thee evermore,
 On all thy paths of life!

When thou growest weary of the long, sharp road,
 Its sultry heat and care,
 Then will I lay my hand upon thy brow,
 Light as a breath of air.

And when thou wakest at the midnight hour,
 While hushed in every sound,
 A yearning sense of pain within thy heart,
 And loneliness around,—

Then will I like a silvery moonbeam bright,
 Into thy presence glide,
 Stepping across the floor with noiseless tread,
 And kneel down by thy side.

And whisper of the dreams of youthful days,
Of hope and trust and strife,
Of her whose answering love should once have been,
The glory of thy life.—

And there in the dark silence of the night,
My tears thou shalt not see,
That her sweet shadow evermore must stand,
Between thy heart and me!—

HEARTS-REST.

MY love is one of the great of the land,
 His deeds of valor sound far and near,
 So brave and noble, so good and so true,
 Loving all goodness, knowing no fear!—
 —How I sat and dreamed of the splendid feats,
 The noise and clangor of battlefields,
 The waving banners, and shoutings of joy,
 The flashing sabres, and shimmering shields!—

How well I remember the summer eve,
 A rider came to our garden-gate,
 A stately knight on a noble, black steed,
 Weary and worn, for the hour was late.—
 —“Wilt give me a draught from the well?” he said,
 With a wave of hand and kindly eye,—
 A cup full of water I reached him up,
 And near his charger stood waiting by.

And he drained the cup at a single breath,
 Then quickly handed it down to me,—
 “I thank thee, good maiden,” he smiling said,—
 “It is Sir Seaton, who thanketh thee!”

And then he put spurs to his proud, black steed,
Nodded his head in sign of goodnight,
His white plume waved in the rays of the sun,
Far down the valley his scarf gleamed bright.

He looked not behind him, but galoped away,
—My face grew white, and my heart beat high,—
—Him I dreamed of so long, had I seen?!—
Lonely, O very lonely was I!—
—“I thank thee,—Sir Seaton, he thanketh thee!”
Over and over to me I said,—
A noble, great knight full of fame is he,
And I but an humble village-maid!

The sun was set and the nightwind rose,
And yet I leaned at the garden door,
The one that I love by night and by day,
I never shall see him any more.—
My love is one of the great of the land,
So endlessly far, and yet so near.—
And so shall it be forever and e’er.
Through all the changes of every year!

I asked the stars in the dusky sky,—
 —Shall it never and never be?—
 —But the proud, cold stars made no reply,
 And would not answer me.

I asked in the woods the great old trees,—
 Shall it never and never be?—
 —They shook their stately heads in the breeze,
 And would not answer me.

I asked the river sweeping and bold,—
 Shall it never and never be?—
 And the waves unceasing onward rolled,
 And would not answer me.

—I asked my sorrowful heart in vain,—
 —Shall it never and never be?—
 That only throbbed in passionate pain,
 And could not answer me!—

PRAYER.

WHEN I have died and rest at peace,
From earthly anguish free,
Sweet birds and flowers, then grant the prayer,
I now shall ask of ye!—

O joyous lark who at bright morn,
Dost fly the sky so near,
Warble his name to the heavens,
So loud that I may hear!—

O little bird who at gray eve,
Bends closer to mine ear,
Whisper his name to the grasses,
So soft that I may hear!—

O thunders majestic, rolling
In storm-filled clouds o'erhead,
Repeat his name to the mountains,
Startling the echoes dead!—

—O promise when I rest at peace,
From earthly anguish free,
Sweet birds and flowers, to grant the prayer,
I now have asked of ye!—

BRIGHT noonday kiss his noble brow,
 That none more wisdom have than he,
 T read the secrets of the past,
 And all the things that are to be.

Red sunset kiss his noble lips,
 With gentle touch, with loving glow,
 That in its light once more he dreams,
 The sweetest dreams of long ago.

Bright silver moonbeam kiss his hand,
 That as in visions dim, he see
 What never shall be known to him,
 How well beloved he is of me!

THY heart is like the sun within the sky,
 That makes the whole world bright,
 And as thou beam'st on all from there on high,
 So I receive thy light.—

Why should I mourn, that like unto the rest,
 Thou also giv'st to me?—
 And yet I weep to think that I am blest,
 Like all humanity!—

LOVE me as thou may'st love the silvery light,
Of some far, shimmering moonbeam faint and small
That glides across thy foot on summer night,—
—O love, but do not love me not at all!—

Love me as thou did'st love, a little child,
The grasses on the meadow high and tall,
Or blossoms in the forest, sweet and wild,—
O love, but do not love me not at all!—

Love me as some faint music far away,
That pleasantly upon thy ear may fall,
At stilly eve of some long, weary day,—
—O love but do not love me not at all!—

Love me as the swift shadow of the feet
Of her who should have been thy all in all,
As she some other loved one flew to meet,—
—O love, but do not love me not at all!—

GRANT, O God! this only grace,
Once to see my loved one's face,
Ere I die!—

Let him clasp his hand with mine,
Let me read his soul divine,
• In his eye!

Once, O once but let me say,
How I loved him night and day,
Ere I die!—

Grant me Father sweet, but this,
That he once my lips may kiss,
For good-bye!—

MY love, my love must perish,
 For it is sin to cherish,
 Now that thou lovest another,
 A fairer one than I!—

I bless thee love, forever,
 I can forget thee never,—
 And since thou lovest another,
 I must lie down to die!—

I know thy lips are stern and proud,
 Because they may not tender be,
 The coldness in thy mournful eyes,
 Has told the tale to me.

They never looked with light of love,
 On any thou could'st call thine own,
 None ever spoke thy blessed name,
 In low, melodious tone.

No arms were clasped about thy neck.
 No merry childlips pressed to thine,
 Thy heart has never throbbed with joy,
 Seeing home's firelight shine.

The lifelong chill runs through thy veins,
 They know, who at another's hearth
 Forever sit with hungering souls,
 The lonely of the earth!

What every beggar calls his own,
 Thy portion never was to be,—
 All—grateful thousands in the dust,
 Kneel down and worship thee!—

I see the lonely grave shall be,
Where the branches murmur low,
And the winds are sighing morn and eve,
And whisper and come and go.

Even the bee hums not so loud
And the bird sings fainter song,
And the butterfly scarce moves its wing,
As it softly floats along.—

The parched, brown grass shall ne'er be green,
Through the solitary years,
For it is not touched by loving hands,
Nor watered by burning tears.—

Hero and statesman are laid aside,
With the garb of common clay,
And my sorrow for the lonely man,
Is greater than I can say!

MISCELLANEOUS.

FULFILLMENT.

O when he said he loved me well, I heard the angels
sing,
My soul fell down to kiss his feet, my Master and my King !
O sweetest joy forevermore, that words can never tell !—
If I should die now, Father mine, methinks it would be
well!

How shall I ever smile again, when through my blinding
tears !
Appear in glorious rain-bow tints all the succeeding years ?—
How shall I e'er know time again, when round about I see,
The shadows of all earthly things melt in eternity ? !—

With lips he kissed when promised I, to be his darling wife,
How may I ever speak again, the common words of life ?—
With eyes wherein my love hath shed, the lovelight of his
own,
How may I ever look on aught, but God's eternal throne ? !—

DEAD HOPE.

WEARY, ah, very weary,
The hours unceasing go!—
Like cloaked and hooded friars,
With heads bent meek and low.—

Mournful, ah, very mournful,
Their dirge sounds and their song,
Telling their beads, the seconds,
Slowly they pass along.

Lovely, ah, very lovely,
The blighted form they bear!—
Death-still, and yet so life-like,
In the red sun-sets flare.—

Meekly, ah, very meekly
Her hands upon her breast!—
Our faded Hope they carry,
To her eternal rest!—

I am but as a broken reed,
Beside the rushing river,
And at my feet the waves flow on,
Forever and forever.

The purple clouds of evening-red,
Are mirrored in the river,
The sun will rise, the sun will set.
Forever and forever.

The winter with its icy winds,
Binds up the mighty river,
The summers go, the winters come,
Forever and forever.

Through moon- and sunlight, spring and fall,
Beside the rushing river,
I am but as a broken reed,
Forever and forever.

POWER.

IN deepest night a spirit came to me,
Clothed me in robes of gold and purple made,
The proud attire of kingly ponoply,
And then in voice of thrilling grandeur said,—

“Go forth to conquer!—Over all the land,
And all the world, spread freedom and the right,
For in the hollow of thy single hand,
Shall be concentrated earth and heavenly might!

The destiny of empires shalt thou mould,
The weal and woe of millions make thine own,
O’return the trembling monarchies of old,
Of wrong and tyranny the hateful throne!”—

But I took off the royal robe and crown,
That would have given me empire far and wide,
The mighty jeweled sceptre I laid down,
And falling at the spirit’s feet, I cried,—

“Be merciful, O Spirit!—give to me,
The power of present time and days of yore,
The only glory of eternity,—
To love and be beloved, I crave,—no more!”

IT seems to me life has been so all long—
 So full of pain, and knowledge of the wrong,
 So full of struggle and of strife and fears,—
 Mine eyes so often filled with blinding tears,
 With bitterness my soul so often sore,
 Yet raised so oft to God with joy most sweet,
 And strong with love and hope so oft my feet,
 —I wonder it should still go on and on,
 From night to day, and twilight unto dawn,
 I wonder what there still be left to know,
 Except the same forever o'er and o'er,
 That I have learnt by heart so long ago!—

SUNDAY MORNING.

A Sunday morning!—O'er the fields of waving corn,
Where thrush and partridge nestle in their quiet lair,
The sound of distant bells upon the breeze is borne,
And trembles softly through the balmy summer air.—

The hills lie dreaming in the sunshine,—far away,
Upon some flowery meadow sweet, the cockerels crow,
And floating on the breeze of this calm, holy day,
Come memories to my heart of long, of long ago!—

TENNYSON.



Poet great, O Poet free!
 A wondrous wreath for thee I wrought,
 Of dew-drops from my soul's deep sea,
 And leaves and flowers of loving thought!

O Poet free, O Poet great!
 Who through all coming time shall live,
 Thou sitst in loftier pomp and state,
 Than any that my heart may give!—

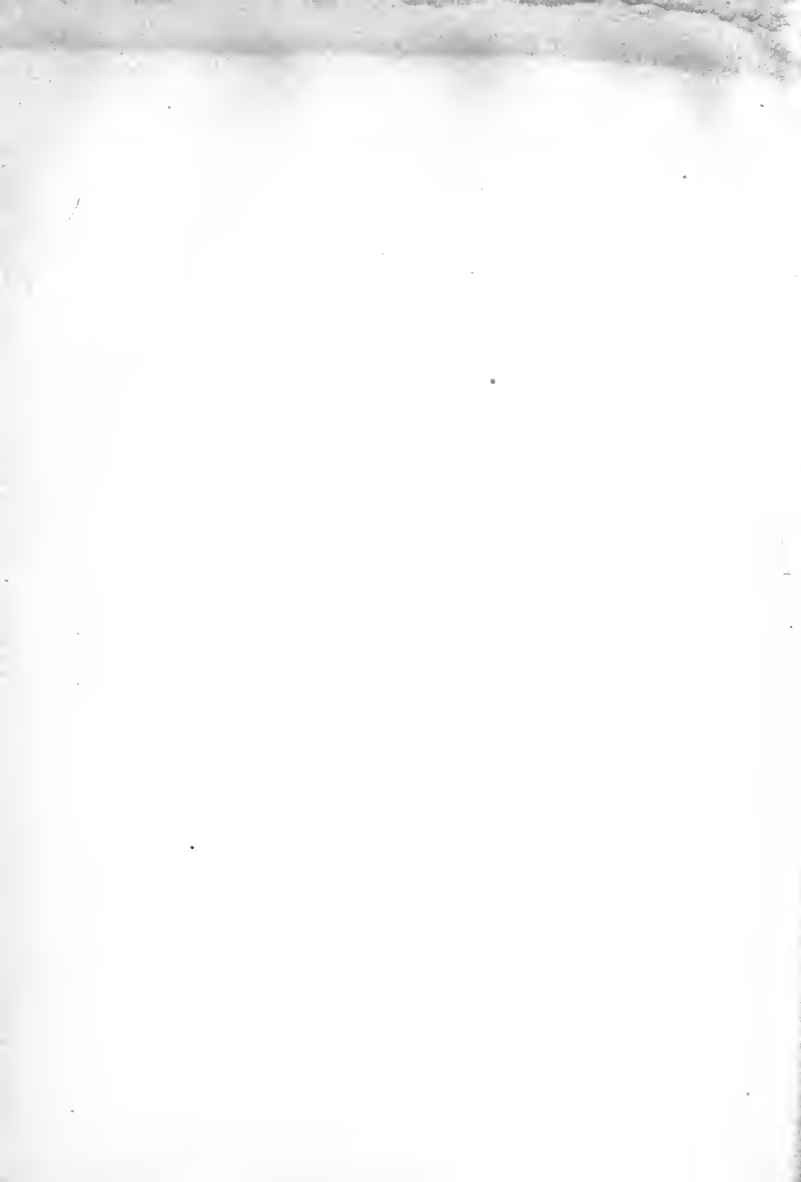
O Poet proud, to thee all hail!—
 The Chaplet from my hand drops down,
 —The honors to the Bard grow dim,
 Before the Laureate's greater crown!

THE BARD.

NO! not in purple shall the Bard be born;—
 But in the lowly manger of humility,
 About his aching brow a crown of thorn,
 A drop of heart's-blood every word shall be.—

Bitter as worm-wood is the cup of pain,
 The world doth give, and oftentimes the word,
 "O Father, let this pass from me!" in vain,
 From his pale lips in anguished tone is heard.

A second Saviour he, from commonplace
 Us to redeem, and crime, and other curse,—
 And stretching out his arms, with upturned face,
 He claspeth to his heart the Universe.



TO JOHN A. DORGAN.



PROMETHEUS.

O great Prometheus!—Yea the envious gods,
 Have chained thee to a lowly coach of pain,
 Weary and everlasting,—where the hours
 Are measured by thy spirit's agony!—
 —No sun the day hath, and no stars the night
 For thee, whose gaze is upward turned on high
 Unto the skies, in vain beseeching prayer,
 For thee whose fettered hands are powerless, forced
 To inactivity more dread than death,
 While evermore before thy yearning sight,
 Blazes the heavenly fire!—

But though I weep,
 To see thee bound and shorn of all thy strength,
 O great Prometheus, I the earthborn child,
 Envy the hopeless anguish of thy days!—
 For in the harshness of thy penalty,
 I know the greatness of thy enterprise,
 The glory of thy thought, and O how near
 Was thy success!—and in thy weakness e'en,
 There is a strength I crave!—

Prometheus great!

My mortal hands are free and fettered not,
 And yet, and yet, O God, so powerless weak!—
 To me the sun shines, and the golden stars,
 Because I may not see the heavenly fire!
 Unto my prayers the gods lend gracious ear,
 Because I may not dare and do as thou!—
 Prometheus!—O immortal god sublime!—
 To hold but for a day thy matchless power,
 I too would suffer through all coming time!—

O do not forget us in that far land,
 Dear friend, O do not forget!—
 There from whence never a message may come,
 To tell thou lovest us yet!—

—Sometimes when fanned by those heavenly palms,
 That grow on the blessed shore,—
 Sometimes when quaffing the waters of life,
 That flow there evermore,—

Think of us toiling in heat and in care,
 On the dreary earth below,
 How heavy of heart, how fainting of soul,
 How weary of foot, we grow!—

That we fight the battle of life and death,
 With the foe still unsubdued,
 When thy soul shall know, through all coming time,
 The passionless rest of Boodh!—



Friend thou dearest of my soul, and is it thus we
meet!—

That while I clasp thy hand in mine,
And while mine eyes look into thine,
The surging waves of death's dark stream already wash thy
feet?—

O are the shores of life, sweet friend, now fading from thy
sight?—

And while I speak low words of love,
Are gathering round thee from above,
The shades that flit across thy brow, of everlasting night?—

'Thou say'st thou smilest, O my friend?—through tears I
cannot see!—

—O thou the King, must pass away,
While I the beggar kneel and pray,
That I might die, and thou mightst live, for all humanity!—

“PATIENCE, a little patience yet!”—he said,
 The sufferer with the meek and gentle eyes,—
 “The night will pass away from earth again,
 And day will shine within the far-off skies.

—Patience, a very little patience yet!—
 The spring with all its flowers will come once more,
 And bring the song of birds and murmuring brooks,
 And all the joys of life I loved of yore!

Patience, a very little patience yet!”—
 —And even while he spoke, his soul had flown,
 Bursting the chains that bound it to the earth,
 And stood before God’s everlasting throne.—

“Patience,—a very little patience yet!”—
 —O friend, the teachings of thy dying breath,
 We find so hard to heed since we have seen,
 Thy heart divine stand still and break in death!

NEW YEAR, 1867.

SLOWLY the weary hours of darkness passed,
That bore another night, another year away,
Far in the East the dawn rose up at last,
That brought the world another year, another day.

Thine eyes beheld that New Morn's golden ray,
Then closed on earth forever, as there burst on thee
The splendors of that everlasting day,
Where dawn and night and morn are one eternally.—

To thee in lonely hours God's spirit spoke,
His shining garment's hem 'twas given thee to embrace,—
Thy throbbing heart in passionate yearning broke,
To see the glory of the Godhead face to face!—

—And so the weary hours of dark are past,
That bore the silent shades of death away from thee,
In that New Morn dawned on the world at last,
Thy soul passed through the Portals of Eternity.—

I saw thee in my dreams, O friend !
 On weary death-bed lying,
 And could not bear to think it then,
 That thou, O friend, wert dying!—

I woke, O friend, and knew that thou
 In lonely grave art lying,—
 How can I bear the weight of life,
 Remembering friend thy, dying ?!—

GIVE me thy royal purple, O my King!
Which thou hast from thee cast,
For through my beggar-garments, O my King,
Shivers the cutting blast!—

Give me thy gold-starred diadem, O King,
Which thou hast flung away,
For o'er my head the winter sweeps, O King,
And icy storm-winds play!—

Give me thy jeweled sceptre, O my King,
O'er souls of men to reign,
My hands though weak, will strengthen, O my King
Such power sublime to gain!—

The glory of this little world, O King
Is needless unto thee,
O grant that with thy earthly pomp, O King,
A monarch I may be!—

BECAUSE thy life hath been so great,
 We thought thy death we might forget,
 And that our tears of vain regret,
 Would cease to flow as time rolls on,
 And that thy young fame's morning dawn,
 Would prove the black cloud's silver line,
 Into our sorrowing hearts to shine,
 And cheer our sad lives desolate!—

But as the weary days go by,
 And comes again the joyous spring,
 With golden sun and blossoming,
 And singing birds, and balmy air,—
 Our sorrow seems too great to bear,
 Our tears fall fast as summer-rain,
 That thou shalt never see again,
 The splendors of the earth and sky!—

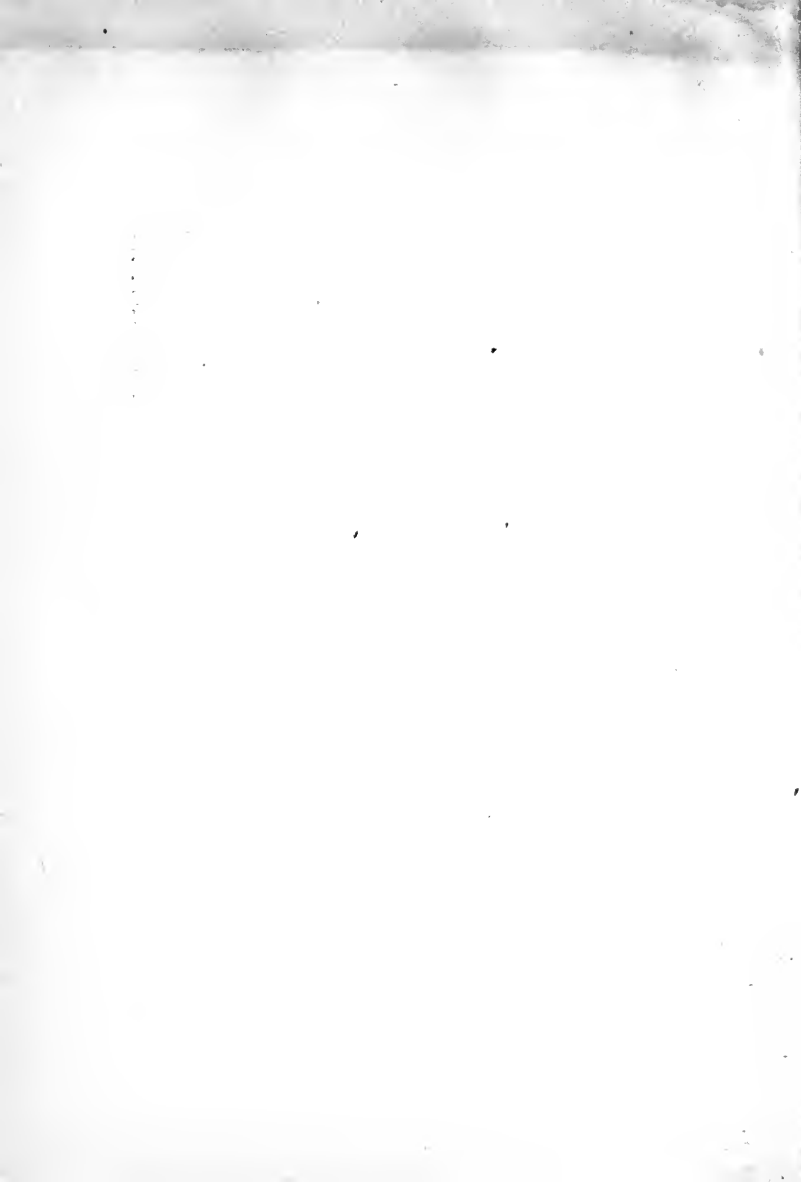
THE winds that moan about my hearth,
Sweep o'er thy grave, I know,
And whirl from off the silent earth,
The shining flakes of snow.—

The winds that moan thy grave above,
Sweep o'er my spirit sore,
And wake again its ancient love
In all the strength of yore.—

The winds that move my spirit, wave
The swift tears to mine eyes,
Until above thy lonely grave,
I cannot see the skies!—

TO * * *

“Nimm sie hin denn diese Lieder,”——
Du, den ich so sehr geliebt!—



BEFORE AND AFTER.

BEFORE.

CALL me not hence, my God,
 When the broad sunshine lies on every field,
 Drawing the richest perfume from the flowers,
 On which the busy bee hangs drowsily,
 Weary with noonday heat ;—
 But late at night, when the dark storm-clouds fly,
 And the loud roaring thunders roll above,
 And flaming lightnings fright the timid world,
 —Then call me, O my God !—
 For I desire to go as he has gone,
 Who in the peace and in the storms of life,
 Was e'er the dearest refuge of my soul,—
 Not because sunshine makes the earth more fair,
 And life more sweet, and to yield up more hard,—
 Not heaven itself were sweet where he is not,
 No path so dark, so filled with shadowy phantoms,
 With thorns below, with ghostly dread above,
 I fear to walk it if it leads to him.— —
 —When the loud roaring thunders roll above,
 Send then a flaming messenger for me,
 Then call me, *O my God!*—
 So had I prayed, knowing not often more,

Should I behold the golden sun-set tints,
Touching the distant tints,
And while e'en then the breath of death's dark waters
Crept upward to my feet.—

AFTER.

The storm was past,—the Lord had heard my prayer,
And sent a flaming messenger for me,
That rent my spirit from its earthly ties,
And bore it unto unknown heights above.—
All round was night.—And like the butterfly,
When first his narrow cell is burst, comes forth,
His delicate winglets trembling at each breath,
My soul went quivering forward through the dark,
Shrinking and timid, and yet thrilled and glowing
With some blind joy, such as the vague delight
The voiceless presence of some loved one gives;
—And I stood still and asked,—“Who art thou, soul,
That here art near me in the heavenly realms,
Whose breath is like to music in mine ears,
And like to light to mine unseeing eyes?!”—
And close to me a voice said:—“I am he,
That in the peace and in the storms of life,
Was e'er the dearest refuge of thy soul!”—
And with a cry that shook the darkness round,
My trembling soul sprang forward to his arms,
And as I felt his kiss upon my brow,
The night was rent as with a flaming sword.
And in the blazing light of Heaven he stood,
Clasping me to his heart!—

O my star that shone on ever, shimmering far through
clouds and night,
When all others wrapped in darkness, long had vanished
out of sight!—

Thou my purple stripe of sunset, lingering in the dreary
skies,
When the years like some gray ocean, endless stretched be-
fore mine eyes.—

Thou my palm-grove in the desert, with thy fountains cool
and sweet,
Giving evermore refreshment in the noonday's burning
heat— —

Thou my altar where in worship, kneeling I have ever
brought,
All my soul's most fragrant blossoms, all the richest fruit of
thought,

Thou my heart through whose pulsations, my own life-blood
ebbs and flows,—
Thou my sun round which revolving, my own life to ra-
diance grows,—

—O, of all who gather round thee, there where spring-morns
 ever shine,
 None may bear thee such devotion, love thee with a love
 like mine!—

And I know when I admitted, enter on eternity,
 Thou wilt turn thee from all others, come to meet and wel-
 come me!—

SHOW me thy face!—I have renounced for thee
 All dreams of love and earthly happiness,
 Jealous test for an hour another's presence,
 Might make thine image pale within the soul
 That calls itself thine own forevermore,
 Through all eternity.—Show me thy face,
 O thou so near, we clasp thee to our hearts,
 And yet so distant that the furthest star,
 In all the immeasurable heights of heaven,
 Is nearer to our sight!—Show me thy face,
 Round which eternity has closed!—to us
 Dim, dark, impenetrable night,—to thee,
 A glorious, shining day.—

Show me thy face,—

Not such as now it is with heaven's glad light
 So radiant on thy brow, we scarce should know it,
 But such as then it was, when yet on earth,
 The vale of tears and shadows, thou wast wont
 To live and labor, and to weep and suffer,
 As we do now.—When sometime thy soul too,
 Bleeding beneath the burden of its cross,
 Nigh fainted by the roadside, as do ours,
 And yet arose again and yet again,

With giant-strength, and seized its cross once more,
 And went its onward way.—Show me thy face!—
 With all thy proud defiance of the gods,
 With all thy strength against the stings and smarts
 And nameless pain, they, jealous of thy power,
 Sent thee in ceaseless flood.—Show me thy face,
 With all the battle of life upon thy brow,
 With all the storms that vexed thy soul divine,
 Yet bursting through all shadows of the earth,
 Like to a star through clouds that wrap it round,
 The godly light of immortality!—
 —Show me thy face!—

—„Ich wollt' ich säß an seiner Thür,—und er erkannte an meinem Blick weß Geistes Kind ich wäre.—Gewiß er hieß' mich nicht wieder gehen, ich dürfte fort und fort im Hause herumwandern, und so vergingen die Jahre und das Leben, und in seinem Antlitze spiegelte sich mir die ganze Welt.“—

Bettina v. Arnim.

WOULD I had lived,
 In the long blessed years that are no more,
 And at the dusk,
 Some golden summer eve come to thy door,
 And softly knocked,
 And thou hadst opened, waiting silently
 For me to speak.—
 But I through all the dark beholding thee,
 Uttered no word,
 But gazing on thy face beloved, mine eyes
 Had grown like stars,
 That shining pierce the shadows of the skies;
 And seeing them,
 All my soul's love undying hadst thou known,
 Too great for speech,
 And how my heart and life are all thine own,
 Forevermore.—

And thou hadst said,—“Come in!”—and bid me stay;
 —And I had staid,—
 But as thy handmaid,
 Through summer sun and winter’s darker day,
 Through many a year,
 Spreading thy board, keeping thy hearth-fire bright,
 Joyful to know that I made thee forget
 Life’s petty cares,
 That like the meshes of a tangling net,
 Ere I had come,
 Hampered thy spirit in its upward flight.—
 My sweet reward,
 —When day was done,—my heart’s most deep delight,
 To sit and list
 To the charmed sounds thy hands drew from the keys,
 As thy great soul,
 Poured all its pain and joy in melodies,
 And ’neath the stars,
 Rose upward to the Godhead through the night.—
 Or lie awake,
 Listening to thy loved footsteps o’er the floor,
 As to and fro all restless thou wouldst pace,
 Hearing the tunes,
 That angel voices chanted to thee from the skies—
 Or at still eve,
 By the calm lamp-light sit and watch thy face,
 The lights and shadows,
 That o’er it moved, as some great book of lore,
 Filled all thy thought,

And wandering from the page, perchance thine eyes,
 Would rest on me,
 And unto thee
 Once more my love undying should be known,
 Too great for speech,
 And thou shouldst reach
 Thy hand to me, and smile!—O to thy door,
 Could I have come,
 In the long blessed years that are no more!—

THE dusk had fallen when to his house I came,
 And all was silent,— silent the dark stairs,
 Silent the room once filled with melodies,
 Silent the stars that shone above the roof,—
 The self-same stars on which his gaze was fixed,
 —Sometimes the light upon his brow outshining
 Their fainter splendor, sometimes their pale shimmer
 Darkened by earth's deep shadows in his eyes.—
 —And slowly rose the moon, and traced for me
 In silver lines the course upon the floor,
 Where he was wont to pace and up and down,
 And showed the door-step over which he passed
 So many a time, in the long years gone by,
 His heart afire and his great soul aflame,
 With all the joys of heaven and pains of earth,
 And dark despair of hell,—struggling for freedom
 In godly sounds, while all the world outside
 Was tossed by storms, perchance, or drowsed in sunlight,
 And he knew naught, nor heard.—

And I knelt down,

And kissed the silent doorstep,—here perchance,
 Some mote of dust hallowed by his blest feet,
 And happy in its glory, saved itself
 To some dark corner, and through all these years
 May yet be there, and come and touch my lips!—
 —O ye dumb walls that heard his every heart-throb,
 O ye mute stars that read his deepest secrets,
 Tell me of him, of him ! — A little while
 Tell me of him, sweet stars, and I will give ye,
 All the long future years that may be mine,—
 —I, but a mortal, whose brief life is fleeting,
 To ye, whose lives are as eternity!—
 Or unto thee, gray, sorrowful Time, I promise
 All the spare sunlight it may be will checker
 Those future years, leaving them cold and bleak,
 And thousand-fold more bitter than fierce death,
 If thou wilt turn thee back into the past
 One single instant and wilt give to me
 One hour of his beloved living presence!—
 —My heart has hungered for so long, so long,
 To once behold his face, it faints today,
 And will not have its craving comforted,
 And cannot ever feed on that starved hope,
 To greet him once when life has long been done,
 In that far land of silence and of shadows,
 On which we enter through death's darksome portals!—
 —Now would I see him, in this very hour,

Now kiss his hands, now fall before his feet!—
 —But calmly do the merciless stars smile down,
 On me, who promised them my earthly years,
 Heedless and deaf to all my passionate prayers,
 Time's shadowy figure turning not her head,
 Moves on and ever on, with muffled foot-fall,—
 And through my soul thrills a swift pang of pain,
 Sharper than death!—

O thou my soul, my life, my hope, my star!—
 Thou all that makes the hope of heaven a joy,
 Thou all that makes the burden of life more light,
 None yet have loved thee with a love like mine,
 A love beyond or change, or time, or death,
 And wide as great eternity itself!—
 —A love so tender, it would shelter thee
 Close to my heart, like a sweet, trembling dove,
 —A love so strong, it would do battle for thee,
 Against the fiercest storms the gods may send;
 —None yet have known thee, as I know thy soul,
 The evil hours and heavenly that were thine,
 The fiends and demon's that have come to thee,
 The angels with the shining lily-rods,
 The glimpses thou hast caught of heaven and hell!—
 —None yet have fathomed thee as I have done,
 O thou my glorious ocean!—measureless,
 And boundless, and eternal as my love!—
 None seen as I the golden evening clouds,
 Shine on thy bosom, when the waves lay still.
 Or the forked lightnings set their crests on fire,
 When the fierce storm-winds tossed them to the skies,—


None dived as I into thy deepest depths,
 Whose night no human eye has yet explored,
 That neither moon- nor starlight penetrate,
 Where but the pearl sheds feeble radiance round ;
 —O thou my soul, my life, my hope, my star!—
 What love can equal mine!—

And yet, ^{and} yet,—!

—I know that wert thou with me even here,
 And I beheld the glory of thy brow,
 On which is set the gods immortal kiss,
 —And fell at thy beloved, blessed feet,
 With not poor words, but only tears for speech,
 —Though thou shouldst raise me kindly in thine arms,
 And clasp me for an instant to thy heart,
 And touch, perchence, my forehead with thy lips,—
 —I yet should go from out thy godly presence,
 Poorer than any beggar at thy door,
 Hungering and thirsting, with a thirst and hunger,
 That rends my soul with all the pangs of death!—
 —Yet sometime from my yearning spirit too,
 Shall drop away the weary chains of earth,
 And then my soul, beyond death's shadowy waters,
 Shall meet thine own, and know it instantly,
 And our two souls, like to a towering fire,
 Shall rush together in a single flame,
 And spire together to the heavenly skies!—
 —And O in that embrace, my life, my star,
 Shall be contentment inexpressible!—

IN all heaven's perfect bliss, hast thou forgotten
 This petty earth, with all its weight of woe,
 And us, who still in twilight grope our way,
 —And knowest not that a human heart below,
 Throbs and nigh breaks with passionate love for thee?—
 Or is the blessed star on which thou dwelst,
 So endless far, within the shining skies,
 No word mine ear, no sign may reach mine eyes?—
 —For it is I, O my beloved, whose heart,
 Throbs and nigh breaks in passionate love for thee!—
 —To tell me that thou knowest and seest me,
 And to my prayers wilt sometime make reply?—
 —Or art thou mute because in years gone by,
 Ere thou, O my beloved, hadst come to me,
 I worshipped others,—wore the images
 Of others, in my heart,—have bent my knee
 At other altars, and to other gods?—
 Frown not for this, nor turn thy face away!—
 —What them I brought, was as the love of those

Who love the night, because they know not day,
 Worship the stars, because the blessed sun
 Hast burst not on their sight!—To them I gave
 But the pale blossoms of an early spring,
 A child's weak offerings, unto thee I bring
 All the best treasures of this deeper life,
 Every pulsation of a heart that knows
 Of sunshine less than shade, of peace than strife,
 The prayers, the tears, the yearning of a soul
 Matured in suffering, and in grief grown strong,—
 All the great love I should have borne to him,
 Whose steps I waited for in vain so long,
 Who should have clasped me closely to his heart,
 Holding me dearer than all else beside,—
 The untold tenderness that I had shed
 On some sweet child, whose little arms should twine,
 About my neck, and who should rest his head
 Upon my happy heart.—All my best life-blood,
 I pour like water out before thy feet,—
 Have then thy lips no single word for me,
 Thy soul no sign wherewith my soul to greet,
 Thy heart no throb wherewith to answer me,—
 When mine nigh breaks in passionate love for thee?—

 my beloved,—God shall count the years
 Through which I worshipped thee with single heart,
 And number them alone in all my life,
 As I account for naught the barren days
 Wherein I knew thee not, and hold I lived not,
 Before I loved thee with a love so great,
 Mine own whole life grew as a part of thine,
 And I rejoiced with thee and wept, and measured
 Thy deepest thought, thy heart's most secret throb, "
 —Smarted with the sharp thorns that pricked thy feet,
 On thy rude earthly path, while from above
 Heaven's light shone down,—bled from the cruel steel
 That two-edged entered on thy very soul,—
 And heard the stifled groan, of which the world
 Knew naught but in thy heavenly harmonies,—
 —Grew so much one with thee, I pray the gods
 To send nor joy nor sorrow unto me,—
 Not love, remembering thou didst never hear
 Those sweetest names, that make men's souls rejoice,
 No friend who is to fathom all my heart,
 Remembering thou hadst none,—no bliss or comfort
 That came to thee not,—yet all pain and anguish
 That thou hast known,—and I the heavy cross
 Will seize and onward bear with smiling lips,
 Remembering that it was thy burden once!—

I die,
 With the consuming fire,
 The passionate desire,
 To once behold his face!—

—And knew I where to find him,
 In starless deep of night,
 Would I rise up to wander,
 Until the morning light,

And all the day, till darkness,
 Fell over earth and sky,
 And with the night approaching,
 The stars shone out on high,—

Would I go on unresting,
 Till dawn rose up once more,—
 Seek him with hope infinite,
 On earth's most distant shore.—

And had from earth he vanished,
 Then would through heaven's wide space,
 From star to star, I wander,
 To once behold his face!—

—And then,—
 If unto thee were given,
 That sweetest joy of heaven,
 To once behold his face?—

When thou hadst gazed upon him,—
 O my poor soul what then?—
 —Then must thou die with yearning,
 To see him yet again!—

And yet again, and yet once more,
 And sitting at his feet,
 Ask to gaze on him ever,
 To make Heaven's joy complete!—

And shouldst thou sit before him,—
 O my poor soul, what then?—
 Then must thou die with craving,
 Yet fuller bliss again.—

That in his arms upon his heart,
 He fondly gathered thee,
 And clasped thee close, and held thee thus,
 Through all eternity!—

NOT in the cities of men,
 Not in a populous street,
 Not in wood or in glen,
 Nor where river and ocean meet,
 Not in the furthestmost clime,
 Not in the valley of tears,
 Not in the shadow of death,
 'Mid the long, wearisome years,
 In the gray realms of time,—
 Dwelleth my blessed love!—

But in the infinite skies,
 Where the sun-tints fade away,
 Where the morning stars arise,
 In the land of unchanging day,—
 'Mid the heavens own harmony,
 Free from all struggle and strife,
 Free from all burden of earth,
 Living eternal life,
 In the realms of eternity,—
 Dwelleth my blessed love!—

O thou who by all earth's deep pains art mine!
 How may my heart believe,
 How may my soul conceive,
 The measureless great joy,
 I am to be,
 Thine all in all!—
 Of all the thousands that have worshipped thee,
 The chosen one,
 To rest upon thy heart through all eternity?!—
 —Above the snow
 Let a red rose blow,
 From skies afar
 Drop down a star,—
 Let some sweet wonder tell me I am thine!—
 Make me content to wait
 Through fading time for that eternity,
 That God-sent day that makes me one with thee!"
 —And a voice answered me from out the skies,—
 —"O thou, who by all heaven's deep joys art mine!
 —And lovest thou me,
 With thy heart's every throb,
 With thy soul's deepest love,
 Changeless as shore and sea,
 Boundless as heaven above,—

Then shall thy heart believe,
 Then shall thy soul conceive,
 The measureless great joy,
 We are to be,
 Unto each other all in all,
 But I for thee,
 And thou for me,
 Forevermore through all eternity!—
 —Then shalt thou ask,
 Above the snow
 No rose to blow,
 From skies afar
 To drop no star,
 No wonder sweet, to tell thee thou art mine! :—
 “Enough, O my beloved!” I cried, “enough!—
 I do believe,
 I do conceive,
 And am content to wait,
 Through fading time for that eternity,
 That God-sent day that makes me one with thee!”—

WHEN the long pilgrimage of life is o'er,
 And the dark river forded, and my soul
 Rejoicing climbs that other, golden shore,
 And meets his soul rejoicing, and I fall
 Before his feet, and he shall stoop to me
 And raise me in his arms, and to his heart
 Clasp me, and hold me through eternity,—
 —O then, my god! let from my spirit's sight
 Heaven's glories fade, as from my mortal eyes
 There vanished earth's sweet vallies, streams and skies,
 Let there oblivion come, and starless night,—
 For after that there can be nothing more!—

LEAVE me not life, my God, !
 With this mad, all-consuming love for him!—
 —Send me not death, my God!—
 Lest dying I might cease to think of him!—



love!—

In all the regions of the earth,
Aught mortal eyes have ever seen,
The twilight's gray, the dawn's faint flush,
The morning and the night between,
—Where sun, or moon, or stars may shine,—
—O love, was ever love like mine?—

A love content to know, the form
These empty arms had been clasped round,
Has crumbled into barren dust
Long years, beneath the silent ground. —

Content to know, the heart whereon
To rest, had been so measureless sweet,
Had long been hushed in dreamless sleep,
Ere ever this began its beat.—

Content to gaze upon the mute,
Dead image, of thy face unknown,—
The lips may never more return,
The passionate pressure of mine own.—

May nevermore unbend nor smile,
Nor kiss the tears from out the eyes
Are strained in vain, and night and day,
To read the secrets of the skies.—

Content to feed on that spare hope,
That hungry vision incomplete,
Somewhere beyond death's starless night,
We two shall sometime, sometime meet,—

Sometime when life has long been done,
We two dwell now so far apart,
A voiceless shadow thou and I,
Shall clasp each other heart to heart.—

—In all the regions of the earth,
Aught mortal eyes have ever seen,
The twilight's gray, the dawn's faint flush,
The morning and the night between,—
—Where sun, or moon, or stars may shine,—
O love, was ever love like mine?!—

NOT like the oak and clinging vine,
 Had been our lives united,
 If God had so decreed, O love,
 Thy soul and mine were plighted!—

But like two sturdy oaks, O love,
 And thou and I together,
 Had stood undaunted side by side,
 Through fair and stormy weather,

And laughed to scorn the tempest's rage,
 The lightning's flare and flashing,
 The howling winds, the pelting rain,
 The thunder's roar and crashing,

And clasped each other but more close,
 Our branches interlacing,
 And held each other but more firm,
 Strong root with root embracing.—

—Thus if the Lord had so decreed,
 And thou and I together,
 Had borne the burden of life, O love,
 Through fair and stormy weather!—

"ICH DENKE DEIN."

I think of thee and I am not alone,
 When the fresh morning bursts upon the earth,
 Filling my lonely room with gladsome light,
 And woods and fields with joyous life and mirth,
 And rising I begin the task anew,
 Was given on earth unto my hands to do.—

I think of thee, and I am not alone,
 When the gray evening gathers o'er the earth,
 Filling my lonely room with shades of night
 And with clasped hands I sit beside the hearth,
 And once again the long day's task is done,
 Until another morn shall be begun.—

I think of thee, and I am not alone,
 In the moon's shimmer, and the sun's fierce glow,
 In summer days, and winter's chilly blasts,
 When brown leaves fall, when spring-flowers bud and
 blow,—

In all the changes of the passing years,
 In joy and gladnes, in despair and tears,

Thee will I think of, and be not alone,
 On the dim path where none may walk with me,—
 Where death's gray shadows gather round my sight,—
 —Through the deep river only think of thee,
 Whose eyes, the darkness piercing from afar,
 Shall be my beacon-light and guiding star,
 Unto eternity!—

O my immortal love!—thou wilt forgive me,
 If sometimes when the burden of life grew heavy
 To yet bear on and onward, and my path
 Lay through the darksome vale whose chilling fog,
 Clogging my feet, and rising to my heart,
 Hid the sun's light from me, and the sweet stars,
 And heaven and thou seemed so all far away,
 The weary wings of my too feeble soul,
 Drooped in their flight, and fluttered to the earth,
 Ere they could bear me to those shining height,
 Where thy loved spirit waits my spirit's coming —
 When the gray eve fell, and I sat alone,
 And on my cheerless hearth the fire died out,—
 —If sometimes then, O my immortal love!—
 I hungered for some presence not thine own,
 —Some living presence!—some warm living arms,
 To clasp me to a living, throbbing heart,—
 —A heart not thine,—yet where to rest were sweeter,
 Than have not where to lay my lonely head,—
 —Some sunny, prattling child, not thine and mine,
 To play about me,—hungered for a joy
 More incomplete than in more golden hours

The measureless bliss of that sweet dream thou ever,
 Voiceless, invisible art near me,—yet
 A joy more perfect than this solitude!— —
 Thou my immortal love! thou my soul's comfort,
 Thou only One, thou all that earth and heaven
 Hold of delights,— thou, wouldst transform and change
 The darkest valley of deep hell itself,
 Into a paradise of shining splendors,—!—
 —Thou who hast known the pangs of loneliness,
 The bitterness of a deserted heart,
 With sharper stings than I, and hotter tears,
 Even as thy soul was greater than is mine,—
 Thou wilt forgive, if in those barren hours,
 When the sun's light was hid, and the sweet stars,
 Behind the chilling fogs that wrapped me round,
 Thy shining image e'en paled and grew dim.—
 —Thou wilt forgive,—for with the morn's new rising,
 When the gray eve, and darker night are done,
 Ever and ever like a weary dove,
 My heart flies back, and nestles in thy heart,
 O my immortal love!—

„Es ist uns ein Röslein aufgeblüht,
Mitten im Winter!“

Old Hymn.



I bless thee, joyous winter,
A thousand, thousand times,
With all thy blustering tempests,
With all thy frost and rimes!—

For in the stormy winter,
There sprang above the snow,
A spring more sweet with blossoms,
Than any the earth did know!

More golden with happy sunshine,
More rich with songs of bird,
Than ever mine eyes did feast on,
Than ever my glad ears heard!—

O all in the stormy winter,
 My true love came to me,
 My love no more to leave me,
 Through all eternity!—

—With all thy blustering tempests,
 With all thy frost and rimes,
 I bless thee, O joyous winter,
 A thousand, thousand times!—

O love!—what pitiless, hard decree,
 What blind inexorable fate
 Was it, that severed thee and me,
 And shut my heart from out thy heart,
 And set our lives so far apart,
 'Neath other stars, and other climes,
 In other lands and other times,—
 —Us, whose two souls are one?!—

Thou searching the all dim To-be,
 To find the image of thy dream,—
 —A dream perchance was like to me,—
 —I gazing backward with hot tears,
 Upon the blissful, faded years,
 When yet thy heart in life beat high,
 The form whereon my hungry eye
 E'er feeds and ne'er has done!—

—And thus some pitiless, hard decree,
Condemned to live, condemned to die,
In loneliness and thee and me,
Shut my heart out from thy loved heart,
Set our two lives so far apart,
'Neath other stars, and other climes,
In other lands, and other times,—
Us, whose two souls are one!—



Great Father!—Thou who rulest, heaven and earth,
and sea and land,
Holdst the quivering hearts of mortals, in the hollow of thy
hand,—

Let mine own not break, O Father!—be consumed not in
the fire,
Is the crown of every glory, is the sum of all desire!—

In the love no cloud can darken, no earth-shadow ever
dim,—
Suffer not my soul to perish, in the thirst unquenched for
him!—

Him, whose image I have worshipped, for so many faithful
years,
In the sunshine and the tempest, in delight and bitter
tears,—

For his living, breathing presence, for his voice, his lips, his
eyes!—
Him, long dwells a radiant spirit, near Thee in the shining
skies!—

Him, whose blessed shadow sometimes, with me in an hour
divine,
Folds me to his heart in silence, presses his loved lips to
mine!—

Yet will vanish ever, ever, stay but one sweet moment rare,
Leaving me to clasp forever, weeping but the barren air!—

Let me die not, O my father! with the yearning that e'en
now,
I might feed these eyes forever, on the glory of his brow!—

I might lie at rest forever, on his living, throbbing heart,
Where no clogging earthly fetters, shall my soul from his
soul part!—

Let me pray not for the hastening, of that golden hour su-
blime,
Thou shalt send me, O my Father! surely in Thine own
good time!—

Give me yet to live and suffer, yet submit my will to Thee,
Yet to watch and wait contented, till Thy call shall come
for me!—

Patience, Father! in remembering, peace unto my thirsting
soul,
How each eventide shall find me, nearer my immortal
goal!—

SORE life was done, and all earth's ties unbound,
And my frail soul, set free,
Crept trembling to the shining Gates of Heaven,
Ignorant of its decree.—

“My God! and will you suffer me to pass in,
To see the face of him,
Whose presence shall make all the ecstasies
Of Paradise, grow dim?—

I strove unceasing for immortal aims,
In a hot, weary fight,
With the great hope to render me perchance,
Worthy of this delight!—

But yet accomplished but a barren share,
Of my most full desire,
Feeble performance ever coldly mocked,
My heart's most ardent fire!—

But I have loved him with a love, my God!
 That to give him an hour of sweet content,
 Had gladly yielded up the proudest joys,
 To my pale earth-life lent,—

That to send him a day of blissful peace,
 At his dear feet had laid down smilingly,
 Unknown, unseen, uncheered by him, the hope
 Of all eternity!—

Shall not the power of love prove, O my God!—
 Sufficient in Thy sight,
 To render me the earth-born child perchance,
 Worthy of this delight?”—

—So in the ear of the great merciful Judge,
 Cried my frail soul, set free,
 And breathless at the shining Gates of Heaven,
 Awaited its decree.—

They opened, and a voice said: “Enter in.
 To see the face of him,
 Whose welcome shall make all the ecstasies
 Of Paradise, grow dim!”

LIKE to a sailor lost in unknown seas,
 Who, ignorant where to steer his erring course
 Through the wide, boundless waste, unguided oft
 E'en by the sun, or the pale, friendly stars,
 Enduring untold hardships and great perils,
 Has wrestled with the treacherous winds and waves
 Through fierce, resistless storms, and sluggish calms,
 For many a weary week, and now at dawn,
 With the first ray of light, at length perceives
 Through the gray, rolling mists and dashing spray,
 The blue line of a distant shore, and hears
 From out the mast-head, the loud cry of "Land!"—
 And with a shout of joy, bursts from his soul
 Relieved, and grateful lips, repeats and echoes
 The welcome word: "Land! Land!"—a hundred times,—

Like to the wanderer, who through desert sands
 Has journeyed far, a scorching sun above,
 Withers the life-blood in his burning veins,
 Who, often mocked by visions beautiful
 Beyond his fondest dreams, of springs and palmgroves,
 As he approaches melt and fade away
 In quivering air, before his hungry sight,—
 Now, in the fiery breath of noonday heat,

Gains a green spot at length, stands all unmoved
 As the fresh turf he touches, and lies down
 In the long shadow of the trees, and rest
 Unspeakable, steals o'er his aching limbs,
 —And drinks from out the gurgling spring, again
 And yet again, and with its limpid waters
 Drinks in new life, and measureless deep peace,—

Like to the warrior, who in distant parts
 Has passed 'mid bloody fray, and clash of arms,
 And many a long, hot day, and wakeful night,
 And now the noisy sounds of battle hushed,
 At length returning to his native land,
 At evening when the sun is set,—beholds
 Through all the gathering twilight's deepening tints,
 Through all the dimming tears rush to his eyes.
 His village rise behind the hill, he climbs
 With trembling steps, and heart throbs thick and high,
 —And cheery lights gleam welcoming throug the dusk
 And one outshining all, and drawing near,
 Finds it the ruddy glow of his own hearth-fire,—
 —Kneels down upon the door-step, thanking God
 That this is home,—home, beloved, thrice—blessed home,—
 —Such is my heart, O my immortal love,
 Since that it found thy heart, and bliss eternal!—

NO jarring sounds of noisy earth breaks in
 Upon the Sabbath stillness of our love,
 But as in the deep heart of a great Temple,
 Through whose stained windows the fierce noon-day heat
 Falls mellowed into sunset from above,
 Where the immortal strains of anthems rise,
 And the eternal lamp upon the altar,
 Stirred by no breath. spires ever to the skies,—
 —Against whose walls the turbulent tides of life,
 The blasting tempests of black fate, do shake
 And earth and heaven,—all powerless chafe and break,—
 —Such is the peace divine, unspeakable,
 Of our undying love, O my beloved!—
 A peace as undivided, all complete,
 As those must know, who the dark gulf o'erpassed,
 Sit down rejoicing at God's blessed feet,—
 A peace unruffled by aught palest fear
 Of change or circumstance, of time or death,
 There lives aught ill our souls could ever part,
 For that is wont to sever heart from heart,
 Shall knit us but more close, setting me free,
 From the last bar yet cuts me off from thee!—

THINK you he would have loved me, had he known my
soul,

At the fresh morn,
When first the sun had risen in the skies,
And the long, untried road lay filled with dew,
Shimmering before our eyes?—
—I had been true and tender,
I had been strong and great,
To live with him, or die with him,
If thus had willed our fate!—

Think you he would have loved me, had he known my soul,
At the hot noon,
When the fierce sun hung burning in mid-day,
And we travel-stained pilgrims, had traversed,
Half the long, dusty way?—
I had been true and tender,
I had been strong and great
To live for him, or die for him,
If thus had willed our fate!—

Think you he would have loved me, had he known my soul,
At the gray eve,
When towards its purple setting sank the sun,
And our long journey on the weary road,
Was well nigh done?—
—I had been true and tender,
I had been strong and great,
To live or die,
Apart from him,
If thus had willed our fate!—

SOMEWHERE beyond the confines of the earth,
Sometime ere or thy bleeding heart or mine,
Bore the sore burden of the life of earth,—
—And thou and I trod the bright paths together,
Of some fair, unremembered Paradise.—
There did thy soul, O love! sing unto mine.
Its deepest, sweetest song, its richest strain,
So now my heart, what though it bleed beneath
All the sore burden of the life of earth,
Knows them again, with silent, rapturous tears,
Knows them, familiar as its own pulsations,
Familiar as shall be thy voice, thy presence,
Thy kiss of greeting, when my soul meets thine,
Somewhere beyond the confines of the earth!—

O that sweet spring-time should be known,
 But in enraptured dreams alone!—
 That all its sunshine should have flown,
 Ere life's faint pulses stirred in me,
 Should have been quenched forevermore,
 In a dark grave beyond the sea!—

O that the arms had clasped me round,
 The heart wherein all bliss was bound,
 To dust lie crumbled underground!—
 —The eyes with lovelight gazed on me,
 Are closed, to open nevermore,
 In a dark grave beyond the sea!—

—O that all joy and all delight,
 Vanished from earth with his soul's flight,
 That less of day is left than night!—
 That every hope remains to me,
 Is sought my own dark grave beyond,
 Is set in dim Eternity!—

WHERE should I fly to in the storm and darkness,
 But to thy heart, O my immortal love!—
 Where to lie down for one short hour, were sweeter,—
 —The Lord have mercy on my sinful soul!—
 Than sit at the dear feet of God Himself,
 Through all eternity!—Where to lie down
 Broken and sore, bleeding and full of wounds,
 Were sweeter than be healed, and to remember,
 Sweeter than to forget,—where to lie down
 With the sharp consciousness of smarting pain,
 With all this aching sense of life, were sweeter
 Than peace, and rest, and sleep,—more sweet than death!—

FOREVER and forever,—
 In the flaming day,
 In the twilight gray,
 In the morning light,
 In the starry night,—
 Through all eternity,
 Mine eyes are set towards thee,
 O my beloved!—

SOMEHOW, dreaming of thee,
Shall the long, weary summer noon,
With a flaming sun in a brazen sky,
Glide by full soon!—

Somehow, thinking of thee,
Shall the long, chilly winter night,
With the shimmering stars in the far, cold sky,
Pass out of sight.—

Somchow, laboring for thee,
Shall of all long life, the years
With their summer noons, and their winter nights,
With their storms and sunshine, their smiles and tears,
Speed rapidly away,
To the last, blessed day,
Brings me to thee!—



love, O my immortal love!—my heart,
 Pricked by sharp thorns, smarting from hundred wounds,
 Quivering and bleeding 'neath the merciless stripes
 Wherewith fierce fate does scourge it without end,—
 Draws close to thine, O love! draws close to thine,
 In these bleak, barren days of dark misfortune,—
 At noon so without sun,
 I hunger for dark night that brings oblivion,
 When that perchance my soul communes with thine
 Unconsciously, in dreams, leave in their train,
 A faint reflection of their passing glory
 Upon my waking hours, like the dead light
 A pallid sunset flings o'er dreary skies,—
 —At night so without stars,
 I hunger for gray morn, that brings back memory
 Of God and thee, thou my sole hope and refuge,—
 —Closer in this deep valley of the shadow,
 Than on the heights of peace and joy,—so close,
 Methinks I see thine eyes gaze into mine,
 Hear in mine ear the whisper of thy voice,
 Feel on my quivering lips thy spirit kiss!—

TIS sweet to sit and dream of thee, O love!
 At close of day,
 When overhead the sun's last purple glow,
 Flushes and fades away.

Remembering how in twilight hours like this,
 The silent keys,
 Beneath thy master touch were wont to pour,
 Divinest melodies.

Fancying mine eager ears yet drink them in,
 Though years ago
 They died upon the air, thy hands were laid
 The cold, brown earth below.—

More sweet to watch the night come with its stars,
 And dream thine eyes,
 Were gazing kindly down into mine own,
 From the wide, distant skies.—

Most sweet to dream of that deep starless night,
 When by God's infinite grace,
 In the new dawn shall burst upon that dark,
 I shall behold thy face!—


NOT the blest consciousness my heart throbs high,
 With all of sweetness, ever stirred men's souls,
 With all of greatness lives beneath the sky,—
 Not the proud power was granted unto me,—
 —Me, all unworthy of so priceless gift!—
 To tell in song delight and agony,—
 Not the deep boundless, all-enduring love,
 I bore thee long, unfading as the sun,
 Eternal as the changeless stars above,— —
 —But the sharp grief, the Lord was pleased to send,
 The tears, the smarting wounds, and dark despair,
 The bitter pangs and sorrows without end,
 Make me to know the anguish thou hast known,
 My soul to bleed as thine bled,—all my life
 Joyless, and full of thorns, as was thine own,—
 —Fill me with infinite hope unspeakable,—
 —O golden dream of measureless ecstasy!—
 At some far day thine arms shall clasp me round,
 Thy heart shall love me, as I worship thee!—

THOU hast gazed on me, love, with thy deep eyes,
 In the calm stillness of the summer morn,
 When to unclouded skies, the jubilant lark
 Rose over waving fields of golden corn.

With thy dear smile, love, hast thou looked on me,
 In voiceless quiet of the winter night,
 When upon wood and dale the snow hung glittering
 Beneath the silent stars' eternal light.—

The touch of thy blest lips, love, was on mine,
 In the soft twilight of the eve in spring,
 When on the the branches rich with starry blossoms,
 The birdling slumbered 'neath its tender wing,—

Thou hast been near, O my immortal love!
 In every hour of peace or ecstasy,—
 But when my soul bled with aught cruel smart,
 Travailed in mortal, speechless agony,—
 Then hast thou clasped me to thy living heart!—

 love! and had we met, and thou and I,
 In such an hour divine as this, wherein
 Soaring above this frail mortality,
 All my whole soul exulting, trembling thrills
 With the deep rapture of God's living presence,
 —Hangs on the stars eternal, hearkening breathless,
 To the undying harmonies of Heaven,
 And yet my heart, in every quivering fibre
 Thirsts for the untasted ecstasies of earth,—
 —Our spirits leaping like swift fire to fire,
 Had rushed together in one close embrace,
 And been consumed in that immortal hour,
 In the great passion of that flaming kiss!—

THE lyre whereon I sang of yore,
 All my young heart's most secret prayer,
 Its yearning for love's rapturous bliss,
 Its fondest hope, most dark despair,
 Each idle, childish, glorious dream,—
 I've hung it up beside the stream,
 That hides in its unfathomed bed,
 All joys e'er known, all tears e'er shed.

For greater purpose and desire,
 A loftier thought, a prouder aim,
 Now makes to throb and glow and burn,
 Like to a sacrificial flame,
 Spires ever to the skies above
 Unquenchable, the soul, O love!
 That hides in its unfathomed core,
 Thine image blest, forevermore!—

I did forget him, one heartbroken hour,
The fever of ambition in my veins!—

Old Play.

O my immortal love!—open thine arms,
And take me back into thy blessed heart,
From whence I strayed, fancying in vain conceit,
The timid dove could play the eagle's part,

And gain the steepest heights with power unbroken,
And cleave unwearied the resplendent skies,
And soar into the very sun itself, should light
And guide me in my godly enterprise!—

But found I winged my way through death's dark valley,
No sun-beam, no pale star-gleam, in the heaven,
Naught but the lurid lightning's fitful glare,
And flying cloud-shapes, by the storm-wind driven.—

And fluttered erring, aimless, here and there,
My panting soul athirst for God and thee,
Seemed as all distant 'mid those trackless shadows,
As home and peace, joy and eternity!—

—Yet take me back now, O my love immortal!—
Fold me and hold me close to thy loved breast,—
The eaglet comes, with bruised and battered pinions,
Home to thy heart for everlasting rest!—

SONNET.

NOT hill nor dale, nor yet the boundless sea,
 Naught of the chances that or near or far,
 May other lovers from each other bar,—
 But life itself divides and thee and me!—
 —Life with its thousand throbbing pulses,—flow
 And ebb of joy and grief, of day and night,—
 —O thee, basking in God's unfading light,
 From me, that grope in twilight here below!—
 —Yet not divides!—for they dwell not apart,
 That freed from every earthly bond and tie,
 Know but the blest communion of the heart,
 And even this hour our souls are closer bound,
 Than theirs, who gazing rapturous eye in eye,
 In one long kiss all heaven's delight have found!—

“**O** thou Immortal One!—thou Great, thou Godly,
 —Thou I have loved with a mad love unanswered,
 Yet deathless and unchanging as a star,
 Through so long, tearful, dark, all joylous years,
 Thou art all the whole world’s,—O wert thou mine,
 But for a fleeting hour!—mine own to feed
 These eyes upon, till they forgot their weeping,—
 —These lips smiled at the blackest storms of fate,
 This bleeding heart grew well of all its wounds,—
 One fleeting hour, O my immortal love!”— —
 —So cried I in hot tears, and hotter thirst
 For him, my King, him in whose single sight,
 Are bound all deepest joys of earth and heaven,
 Once in dark, voiceless night, ere kindly slumber
 All merciful, had soothed me in his arms,—
 When suddenly a spirit clothed in light,
 The sweetness of an angel on his lips,
 The greatness of a god upon his brow,
 So all-compelling in his majesty,
 I dropped unwitting at his shining feet,—
 Burst on my dazzled vision, and thus spoke:— —
 —“He shall be thine!—he the beloved in heaven,
 The homaged on the earth!—He shall be thine,
 Not for a fleeting hour, but for all time!—

Of all the thousands worship at his shrine,
 He shall perceive but thee, his spirit fly
 To meet thine own, his heart throb close to thine,
 His soul draw from communion with thy soul,
 Its highest thought, its noblest inspiration!—
 Thee shall he choose to be his friend and helpmeet,
 His comforter, his love!—And soaring upward
 Beyond the earth, beyond the stars, into
 The unfathomed spaces of infinity,
 Bear thee up with him to the Godhead's face!—
 —But yet must thou surrender up all hope,
 All proud endeavor of thine own, renounce
 The gods' great gift to thee, the power of song,
 Content to be his comforter, his love,
 To follow him to those unmeasured heights,
 Thy feeble spirit never scaled alone,
 To know that he shall make thy earth-born heart
 Kindle into divinity, enfolding
 Thee in the blazing fire unquenchable
 Of his undying immortality!"—
 —"No more, spirit divine!" I cried, "no more!—
 Pour not thy eloquence in vain upon
 My unmoved heart!—I am but born of earth,
 Yet is my soul immortal as his own,‡
 If godly not as his!—Let this hot heart
 Burst of its yearning for him, this mad soul
 Swoon of its thirst eternal for his sight,—
 Yet by the God above us!—not for him,

Not for all blisses of his love, not for
 The boundless joy unspeakable, to be
 His friend and helpmeet, comforter and love,
 May I renounce, Spirit divine, what is
 Sweet as his love, stronger than life and death,
 Dear as my soul's own immortality,—
 The gods' great gift to me, the power of song!"
 —And as I cried it, fell upon my face,
 Rent by an agony, as though e'en then
 My heart and soul were perishing, the tears
 The blinding glory of the angel quenched,
 Bursting afresh, in mad, resistless flood.—
 —I heard, nor saw aught more—for how long time
 I may not say,—yet when I looked again,
 The Spirit stood transfigured to the form
 Of him, my King, him in whose single sight
 Are bound all deepest joys of earth and heaven,—
 Him, for the power of song I had renounced!—
 —With a sharp cry I started to my feet,
 My spirit quivering between life and death!—
 —But he caught me unto his heart, exclaiming,—
 "My love!—Mine own!—Hadst thou renounced me not,
 Nor thou nor I, through all eternity,
 Had ever known this moment's ecstasy!"—

I gaze upon thine image, till a mist
Gathers before mine eyes,
And in my thrilling soul wild thoughts and dreams,
And mad desires arise.—

The yearning I might lay my head but once,
Here on this heart of thine,
Those speechless lips uncloze, these silent eyes,
Make me but one sweet sign!—

But then remembering how long years thy heart,
Where sun and wind and rain!
Have smiled and sighed and wept silent above it,
Forever hushed has lain,—

I know that earth to me has naught of joy,
Is stripped of all delight,
That not a flower blooms on my path, whereon
Fell not a breath of blight.—

Know that all life, from sunrise unto set,
Forevermore must be,
One unquenched thirst, one burning, ceaseless yearning,
One mad desire for thee!—

HE walks the earth no more, to whom my knees
 Had bent in reverent homage willingly,—
 —My soul renouncing all its own great hopes,
 Given itself undivided, utterly,
 Content but to be his, and know him mine,—
 Whose eyes were stars, whose smile sunshine to me.—

Full oft the sun has risen and has set,
 Full many silent years have rolled around,
 Since that the ashes of his crumbled heart,
 Have mingled with the kindly, darksome ground,
 Since morn and eve have wept their shining tears,
 O'er the green turf upon his lonely mound.—

—Marvel ye then, I cherish no fond dreams,
 I coldly turn from love, and love's delight,
 That stately forms and noble faces pass
 But like pale, voiceless shadows in my sight,—
 —I weary sometimes of the bustling day,
 Yearn for the stillness of the starry night?—

SILENCE above the moonlit trees, lustrous
 Through all the wood's dark shades, with glistening dew,—
 —Above the distant hills whose purple lines
 Blend with the sky's unfathomable blue,—
 Above the river, whose deep, even flow
 Unruffled, scarce casts back one gleam of light,
 —And silence in my soul, that in this hour,
 Within the voiceless stillness of the night,
 Rises above the earth and soars away,
 The stars above, the glimmering waves below,
 To a lone, quiet grave beyond the sea,
 Where the shadows of the ivy leaves, that grow
 At head and foot, whose shoots sprang up, perchance,
 From the mute, crumbled heart hushed long ago,
 Whose every throb was once sweet melody,—
 Sleep motionless upon the moss-grown marble,
 And in that shadow would most willingly,
 Fold up its weary wings, and lay it down,
 To rest and dream through all eternity.—



WOULD I had been a small, sweet, tender, bud,
 Among the blossoms fair as shimmering snow,
 That mourning friends laid on that sunny day
 In early spring, when they bore thee away,
 Out to the quiet grave, the hill below,
 On thy dead heart!—

Glory enough and joy, and deep content,
 For life and death and all eternity,
 To thus have have rested for a passing hour,
 What though but as a feeble, fragrant flower,
 Whose fleeting soul shall not tomorrow see,—
 On thy dead heart!—

TO ———'S MASK.

A dead face, with, closed eyes, and lips firm set,
 Revealing, but yet shutting in, the groan,
 That in the bitterness of the travail
 Racked his proud soul so often, rose to them,—
 Upon the cheeks traces of secret tears,
 Upon the lofty brow where life's fierce contest,
 And the long course of years carved not a line,
 Marked not a shadow, the deep light of that
 Unfading youth, granted to the Immortal,
 Outshone, not like a star, pale, earthly mists,—
 The kiss of genius and of death comingled,
 Now blending to unruffled, perfect peace.—
 —A dead face, rigid, hewn as from gray stone,
 Massive and rugged, like some great cleft rock,
 O'er which the storm has rolled a hundred times,—
 A face of strength and of unbroken power,
 But softened by no touch of grace, no line
 Of beauty, save that shining from within,
 Too subtle in its essence to remold
 The heavy clay to its own glorious form.—
 —And yet, dead face, dost thou haunt me unceasing,
 And track, and follow me, and day and night,
 And draw, and charm, and bind me to thyself,
 With so almighty, all-resistless force,

That had I loved before, and been beloved,
And my sweet love had been and fair and stately,
As beauteous as the radiant god of day,—
And thy dark image risen up before me,
Upon that happiest day, my wedding morn,—
—E'en then and there 'mid sunshine and rejoicing,
I must have turned away from smiles and mirth,
From light and life and joy, to gaze on thee,—
To come to thee,—to rest with thee forever,—
—Even then and there, from my love's loving heart,
From all my faith and loyalty to him,
Hadst thou won me to thee, to be thine own,
Through all eternity!—And knowing naught
Of other love or lover, how may I
Tell in pale speech, of the consuming fire,
Wherewith my soul feeds on thee, O dead face!?

SONNET.

NAY, he is stately not, my love, nor fair!—
 —His eyes are blue not as the vault of Heaven,
 The sun has kissed his brow not, nor yet given
 Aught of his shining radiance to his hair!—
 —Rather the sombre colors of the night.
 Blend in his image, in his dark eyes flit
 No gleaming smiles, and lowering storm-clouds sit
 Upon the brow where shadow dwells, not light.—
 —But O he is as fair, as fair to me,
 As though the god of beauty and of grace
 Had lent all charms unto his form and face!—
 For through the storm-clouds like a star doth shine,
 Greater than sun or moon, his soul divine,
 That I must love through all eternity!—

IS then love dead?—My great immortal love?!—
 —Love, that was wont to be the golden sun,
 Unto my days, unto my night the stars,—
 That thrilled my spirit with all ecstasies,
 With every pang of earth, and joy of heaven,—
 Taught me the deepest thought, the finest fancy,
 Was so bound up, mingled and knit, past severing,
 With every smallest act of daily life,
 My hearts pulsations and my love were one,—
 —Or wherefore no more at his blessed name,
 Is my soul kindled as with sudden fire,—
 Harkens unmoved now to his songs divine,
 Whereof the feeblest note, the faintest sound,
 Melted it once in speechless, deep delight?—
 And my poor heart, deprived of the sweet warmth
 Each separate fibre glowed with, grown so dark,
 So dumb and cold, it has not even tears,
 Wherewith to weep the hopeless fading,—not
 Of my beloved,—that were lighter loss!—
 But of dear love itself?—
 —Is love then dead?—Alas, I fear me so!—
 For now when every sense awakes anew,
 Each string upon my lyre resounds again,
 But the swift chord, tender and strong in one,
 Whereon I sang his praise, rests mute and silent,

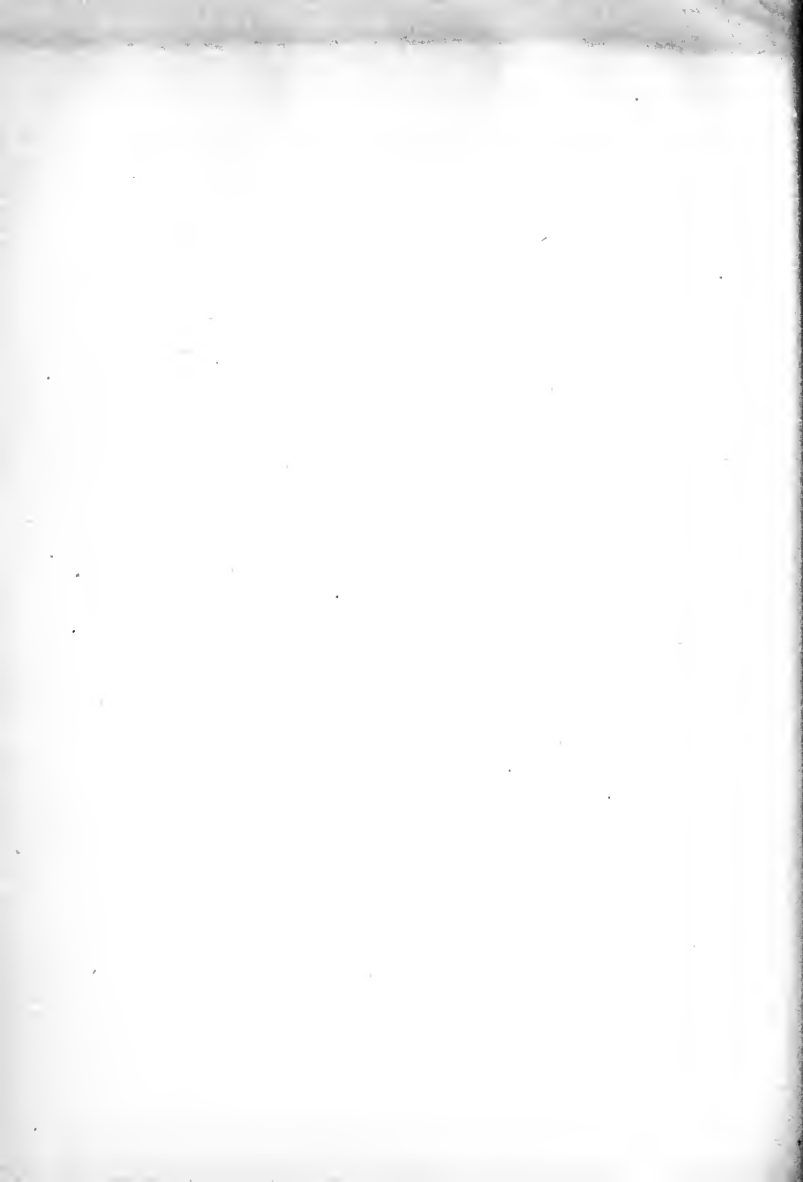
Vibrates no more, with aught of melody,
 And dust and dimness gather o'er the shrine,
 In a forgotten corner of my heart,
 That holds his image, once so passing dear,
 Where none comes now to bend the knee in worship!—
 Ay, is love dead then?—my immortal love,—
 It, that I deemed, I thought, I swore immortal,—
 Wilted like a frail blossom touched with frost?—
 —It, that I fancied should outlive the heavens,
 Endure past every chance of change and time,—
 Prove as eternal through all circumstance,
 As my undying soul itself,—strengthen,
 And grow and bloom, beyond the grave itself,—
 Nay, catching but true breath and flame of life,
 From that which we call death, first know whole power,
 And full existence in eternity!—
 —O is it dead then, and can such love die?—
 —Alas, alas, and is it truly dead,
 Then is there naught eternal nor unfading,
 Then were it possible our soul itself,
 Were frail and perishable and could die,
 Were but a finer essence of the clay,
 Decayed and crumbled with this earthly form,—
 Alas, alas, and is it truly dead,
 Then God have mercy on my heart and soul!—

FAREWELL, O love!—it is the Lord's decree,
 We two must severed be!—
 —In all the future years,
 We two shall nevermore,
 Love as we loved of yore,
 But pass each other with a silent smile!—
 —Yet can I shed no tears,
 Nor moan, nor sigh, to know,
 Stern fate will have it so!—

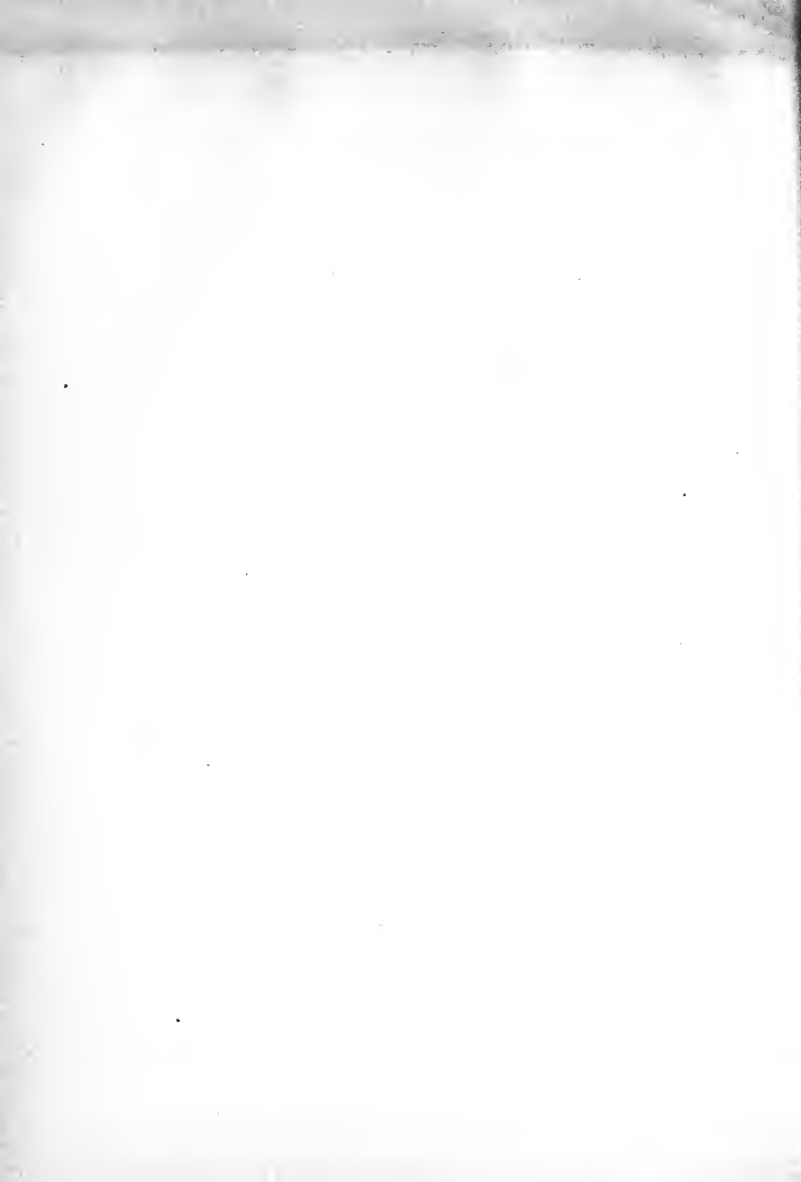
No other love divided thee and me!—
 —Nay, soft and painlessly,
 As swelling from its source,
 A brook flows on between
 Sweet banks of flowery green,
 The slow, resistless stream of time alone,
 In its all gentle course,
 Came thee and me to part,
 From one another's heart.—

I thank thee love, for all the blessed hours,
 This hapless love of ours,
 Brought unto thee and me!—
 The joys and dear delights,
 Of starry days and nights,
 Dreaming of heaven, I rested on thy heart!—
 —Though now I go from thee
 Without a sigh, to know
 Stern fate will have it so!—

—And yet, and yet!—gray hours will come to me,
 I cannot think of thee,
 And start not the swift tear,—
 My heart is broken nigh,
 To think our love must die!—
 —When I renounced all joys of this glad day,
 All hope of future years,
 Were all things as of yore,
 I but thine own once more!—



MISCELLANEOUS.



SONNET.

O ye! the matchless sweetness of whose song,
 Has charmed King Death to lay his purple down,
 Give up his sceptre, and his shadowy crown,—
 —Whose strains shall echo coming times along,—
 —In that same world, by you made great and fair,
 I dare to raise my voice, e'en did I know,
 My fame should perish like the winter's snow,
 My name should vanish like a breath of air!—
 —If I am not of the Elect, whose eyes
 May see the splendor of the heavens afar,
 Whose soul may pass the portals of the skies,—
 —Not on my forehead shines the Godhead's kiss,
 That on your brow stands trembling like a star,—
 —Ye Godly!—O forgive me then for this!—

IT all was over, and the house was still.—
 The hearse had rolled away, the friends were gone,
 Their vacant seats looked blank and desolate.—
 —The muffled mirror hung against the wall,
 The spot was empty where the bier had stood
 Whereon he lay with mute and smiling lips.—
 —And naught remained of him who once had been
 The light of soul, the staff of life to me
 —Naught but the cross, that had been left behind,
 Of odorless, white flowers,—so dead, so dead.—
 And nothing now remained but I alone,
 Alone to live the long, long, joyless days.—
 And so with weary feet I climbed the stair,
 Up to the room where he was wont to sit.—
 —The silent books upon their long-rowed shelves,
 The fair, white marbles in their quiet niche,
 Beside his pen, a bunch of withered flowers,
 The ivy twining round the window frame,
 The noiseless floor where oft his feet had trod,
 The motes of dust that danced within the light,— —
 All was so dead, so dead,—and nothing stirred
 Save at the pane an idly buzzing fly,
 And in his cage the blithe canary-bird,
 That hopped and pecked, and wondering looked at me.

—The golden flecks of sunset on the wall,
 Moved high and higher till they touched his cage
 With purple light,—the little bird burst forth
 In loud, rejoicing song, and I in tears.—

The morning sun was in the room,—I woke,—
 I knew it was a dream,—I knew my life,
 Was heavier than the burden of my dream,—
 —I had not won, I had not loved nor lost.—

IN purple splendor sinks the sun,
 Beyond the darkening West,
 I know that when it comes again,
 I shall have gone to rest.

I mourn thee not, O fleeting life,
 To me thou art not sweet,
 I greet, O dark-winged Messenger,
 The shadow of thy feet!—

I prayed the Lord on High to, give
 Or love or death, to me,—
 He flung the portals open wide,
 Of dim eternity!—

O loveless life, I love thee not,
 Thou never couldst be sweet,—
 O haste thou dark-winged Messenger,
 The coming of thy feet!—

SONNET.

THE bells are pealing o'er the snow," —
 And I without a pang of pain,
 Think when those bells shall peal again,
 Over my grave the breeze will blow.
 —A spark of that celestial fire,
 That ever at God's throne shall burn,
 My soul will soon to Him return,
 Freed from the dross of earth desire.—
 And life and death to me are one,
 Unmourning I shall pass away,
 Knowing that weary strife is done,
 That triumph and defeat shall cease,
 That after night shall come the day,
 And after toil, eternal peace.—

PEGASUS.

THEY have harnessed thee to the plough, my steed,
My steed with the shining wings,
Who longst to soar in the clear, blue air,
Where the joyous skylark sings!—

They have harnessed thee to the plough, my steed,
With the oxen dull and slow,
Who furrows the field with patient tread,
Where corn and potatoes grow!

They have harnessed thee to the plough, my steed,
Thy wings in the dust they trail,
And thou hangst thy head, and sighest loud,
And thy prancing footsteps fail!—

Yet patience, but one little hour, my steed,
My steed with the shining eyes,
Ere long shalt thou burst thy earthly yoke,
And soar to the golden skies!—

MUSE, Muse O Muse !—thou dearer thousandfold,
 Than all the joys of God's own heaven, more sweet
 Than love or friend,—though these be loved so well,
 All joys of heaven were poured at their blessed feet,—
 Thou that dost turn the night to radiant day,
 A barren waste into an Eden, gay
 With all the splendors of undying summer,— —
 Have I not ever loved thee faithfully,
 All my heart bound in thee,
 Have I not served thee e'er with bended knee,
 All my soul given to thee,
 Have I not ever held thee sacredly,
 In the dim sanctuary,
 Or ever prayed thee chant unto the people,
 In the loud market-place?—
 Wherefore, O Muse, shouldst thou then turn from me,
 Hiding thy godly face?—


—Wherefore my hands, were wont
 To draw from out my singing lyre full chords,
 That fed my heart's desire,—
 Wake there but scattered sounds and broken strains,
 Kindle a feverish fire
 Of yearning for the deep content that's flown?—
 —Wherefore should now my lips, were wont to pour
 Swift and melodiously,
 The measured accents of my happy song,
 Sweet, if not strong,
 That quenched the thirst of my aspiring soul,
 Feeble yet full of joy,—
 —Find for all utterance but slow stammering words?
 —Were it perchance my soul,
 Through its long anguish were so powerful grown,
 The lips and hands so well
 Served once that soul, may now no longer tell,
 The godlike thoughts sublime,
 Bear it triumphant beyond earth and time?—
 —Were it perchance my heart,
 Through its long anguish were so seared and blighted,
 It has no throb now more,
 Wherewith to wake the sweet faint notes of yore?—
 Is this the end O Muse!
 Of life, and all endeavor?—for without
 This be the starless night,
 No truce may come in the sharp strife divine,
 Must evermore be mine,

For the performance of an aim immortal!—
 Yet O if this be death,
 I do implore thee, Muse! give unto me,
 E'en with my latest breath,
 Once more to find a full, unbroken tune,
 Once more to sound a strain,
 Shall thrill my fainting heart with ecstasy,
 Once more to smite my lyre,
 And sweet and strong,
 And so myself expire,
 On the last note of my immortal song!—

O the consuming fire,
 Of the unquenched desire,
 Makes life a fever, and this heart a flame!—
 —Not an unholy glow,
 Almighty gods, ye know!
 For that pale shadow, fleeting, earthly fame,
 —But the accomplishment, ;
 Of some nndying aim!—

Ye, that some hapless day,
 Molding this mortal clay,
 Cast in one spark of immortality,
 That rankling in the flood,
 Of this swift-pulsing blood,
 Like to some deadly poison, pauselessly
 Frets me in every hour,
 Steals joy, and peace, and power,
 Drives me to wander as a homeless pilgrim
 Restless o'er land and sea,
 To live nor die content,
 To perish, nor to be,—!—

Give me some flaming deed,
 Great gods! whereon to feed
 This craving soul, wherewith to satisfy
 All the unquenched desire,
 Burns like consuming fire!—
 —A deed 'twere great to live for, or to die!
 A deed shall shed a glow,
 On the dark earth below,
 Like to the track a meteor's blazing heart,
 Leaves on the nightly sky!—

 lark! that risest from dew-glistening fields,
 Into the cloudless, sun-filled morning sky,
 Lost in the rapture of thy warbling song,
 —Soaring so far and high,
 The earth with all its towering hills, appears
 But a green island, in a wide, blue sea,—
 What are to thee,
 The voices of the children in the meadow,
 That laugh and crow,
 So deep below,
 The feeblest echo of their loudest glee,
 Scarce reaches thee?—

O soul! that risest from the happy earth,
 Into the boundless space of heaven on high,
 Heedless if it be day or darksome night,—
 —Soaring to God so nigh,
 The world with all its petty cares, appears
 But a dark speck in a vast sea of light,—
 —That with unruffled calm dost contemplate,

And life and death, or good or evil fate,
 That knowest thine the peace unspeakable,
 Where tears and smiles are done,
 And pain and joy as one,— —
 What were to thee the noisy voice of fame,
 Wherewith men chose perchance to herald thee,
 Through every land and clime,—
 Thee, that dost rise above and earth and time?—

O ye, who stand upon the heights of time,
 Where with eternity it grows to one,—
 Whose names are written on the blazing skies,
 Outshining the pale splendors of the sun,—
 —O ye, the matchless sweetness of whose song,
 Has charmed King Death to lay his sceptre down,
 Ye robed in purple, wearing on your brows,
 A glory greater than aught earthly crown,—
 —Stretch out your hands, give welcome unto me,
 I too, Immortal Ones, am one of ye!—

My singing too, shall with its magic power,
 Burst open graves, and bid the dead to rise,
 Shall make the dim, untried To-be, reveal
 Its deepest tales to mine anointed eyes,—
 Rouse the fierce battle,—let its clangor cease —
 Strike to the heart,—bid pain's sharp moan be hushed!
 Draw joyous laughter, the swift-springing tear,
 As from the smitten rock the waters gushed!—
 —I too sing of all great things 'neath the sky,
 Of all that makes it sweet to live or die!—

I too shall shoot my arrows at the sun,
 Despairing not to draw in purple flood
 The life-blood from his flaming heart!—I too
 Feel in each vein heaven's fires pulsate and glow,
 —Me too shall serve the powers of earth and sky,
 To me be subject heaven and sea and land,—
 Nations be born, and live, and pass away,
 Empires rise up and die at my command,—!
 I too a god, whose breath calls forth a world,
 By whose swift hand the thunderbolt is hurled!—

—I too shall stand upon the heights of time,
 Where with eternity it grows to one,
 My name be written on the blazing skies,
 Outshining the pale splendors of the sun!—
 —O ye, the matchless sweetness of whose song,
 Has charmed King Death to lay his sceptre down,
 —Ye robed in purple, wearing on your brows,
 A glory greater than aught earthly crown,—
 Stretch out your hands, give welcome unto me,
 —I too, Immortal Ones, am one of ye!—

TO — —

THE fire was left to die, the chilly wind
Swept through the opened windows and the door,
And blew the curtains o'er the snowy sheet,
That covered her, whose hand shall nevermore,
So long as all the years of earth roll by,
Draw them aside to look at sun or sky.

TO THE SAME.

I saw the snowy blossoms on the grave,
 In glaring noonday sun, that seared their leaves
 And in the kindlier moonlight, when their petals,
 Sparkled with dew, and when the sky grew dark
 And the fierce stormwind rising, scattered them,
 And whirled their white leaves at the threatening clouds.—
 —But O to thee it matters little now,
 Whether the sun shines, or the storm-winds blow, !—
 Thou seest not the golden light of day,
 Nor hear'st the loudest thunder of the skies,
 And nevermore shalt know the things of earth !—
 —O never, nevermore !—O human heart,
 Thou never yet hast fathomed to its depths,
 The burden of that word, that in a breath
 Compresseth all the agony of years, —
 For to conceive it, and to die were one !—
 —Seize on me too, fierce, merciless hurricane,
 Seize on me too, as on a poor, frail leaf,
 And rend me with the rushing of thy wings,
 And scatter me, I care not how nor where !—
 I crave no everlasting, happy life,
 No consciousness, when this shall cease to be,
 And to forget the present for an hour,
 Renounced all hope of dim Eternity !—

TO THE SAME.

SPIRIT VOICE.

NOT as a stranger from the distant skies,
 Whose mysteries no human eye may read,
 But as a friend, whose life is one with yours,
 So am I with you every happy hour!—
 —In the glad morning when you wake and rise,
 And go about your well-accustomed tasks,—
 Then am I with you, all unseen, unheard,
 And lend you aid and comfort, my beloved!—
 —At the glad noontide, when you gather round
 The cheerful board, there is no empty seat,
 For I am ever with you, my beloved,
 And weep or smile, as you are grave or gay.—
 —In the glad evening, when, the curtains drawn,
 You all assemble round the firelit hearth,—
 I there am with you, breathing in your ear,
 Tales of the beauteous land unknown to you,
 And kiss you on the brow, O my beloved,
 Till you grow strong in faith, and with sweet tears
 Embrace, and say that dreaded death is naught
 But the dark gate to Everlasting Life!—

I turned from sun- and starlight, and broad day,
 And in the dead of night I came to them,
 The Heavenly Gates, and ever found them closed,
 And but a ray of feeble light, more faint
 Than the pale shimmer of some distant star,
 Came slanting through the crevice.—

And I knocked,

With timid finger first,—and no one answered,
 —Then once again, and louder,—yet again
 Came no response, and then at length I cried:—
 —“Will ye not open, open unto me,
 Ye Heavenly Ones?!—I ask not yet to enter
 The glory of your presence, but one moment,
 One single moment, open unto me,
 Give me to gaze from far upon the splendor,
 Wherein you dwell through all eternity!—
 One drop from out the ocean of your bliss,
 Grant unto me, a mortal parched with thirst!—
 —I turned away far from my rugged path,
 And came with weary feet unto your Gates,
 And then will go contented on my way,—

One instant, I implore, ye Heavenly Ones!"—
 —And yet no answer,—and eternal silence
 Reigned all around me,—only through the crevice
 I saw the shadow of their blessed feet
 Move past me, as they glided to and fro.—
 —"O in the name of God,!" I cried once more,
 —"Have pity upon me, a human soul,
 Pleading in darkness here before your feet!"—
 —Yet all in vain, in vain!—And with mad tears,
 I flung myself despairing on my knees,
 And knocked upon the Gates till my frail hands
 Bled with the vain attempt, and I exhausted,
 Fell with my face upon the barren ground,
 —And then a voice,—I know not whence it came,
 If from the mortal darkness round about.—
 Or from the shining realms within the Gates,—
 —Spoke unto me,—"Rise up, and go thou hence!—
 Thou knowest not the desires of thine own heart!—
 —Were the Great Gates unbarred but for an instant,
 The flood of light would blind thy mortal eyes,
 So thou couldst see no more the rugged path,
 Thou yet must travel for a little while.—
 The moon and stars, the sea, the sun, the flowers,
 And all the splendors of the joyous earth,
 That God has fitted for thy glad abode,
 Would pine and wither, pale and be consumed,
 As thine own soul, before the heavenly light,
 —Sometime the Gates will open of themselves,

And shine a radiant star to guide thee on
 Through the dark night, that darkest night of all,
 That yet must gather round thy earthly sight,
 Ere thou mayst enter on the heavenly realm!—
 Rise up, and go thy way!" — —

And I rose up,
 And went my way upon the rugged path,
 I yet must travel for a little while!—

LAY me down deep and lowly, when I die,—
 So deep, I ne'er may hear the skylark sing,
 So deep, from my dead heart no flower may spring,
 No fountain bubble up from out mine eyes,
 From out my lips no sorrowful sigh arise,
 To show him when he passes, where I lie.—

STEAL not in through the casement,
 Thou rustling balmy air,
 Touching as I could never,
 With soft caress his hair!—

Lie not with all your odor,
 Close to his lifeless breast,
 Ye dewy snow-white blossoms,
 Where I was ne'er to rest!—

Kiss not thou flood of sunlight,
 With all thy golden shine,
 The lips that dead, are smiling,
 To which I ne'er pressed mine!—

—Ye loved him not as I did,
 What was he unto ye!—
 The while my heart is breaking,
 For him that loved not me!—

THROUGH all eternity,
 What is it all to me! ?—
 —Springtime and summer, as they come and go,
 The roll of oceans, as they ebb and flow,
 The heavens, if they send down or smile or rain,
 The sun that sets, only to rise again,
 And set once more, to bring another dawn,
 The stars that move forever on and on,—
 So long as his heart never answereth me,
 So long as his love bridges not the sea,
 So long as I have read not in his eyes,
 The hidden secrets of the earth and skies,—
 Through all eternity,
 What is it all to me!—

I know that sometime, sometime we shall meet,
 Sometime shall cease all yearning and all strife,
 Sometime find rest the weary, wandering feet,
 Sometime the broken circle of my life,
 By his beloved life be made complete,—
 But know not shall it be or soon or late,
 Or ere I enter at the Shining Gate,— —
 —God give me strength to be content to wait!—

O come to me sweet love, sometime and soon!—
 —Not now to bring me happiness, as once
 It might have been, before the withering blight
 Fell on the flower that turned so long and vainly
 To where it dreamt the golden sun would rise,—
 —O but to teach me patience, patience, love!—
 —Patience to wait until I too may see
 The Summerland, for which my weary heart,
 Has thirsted, thirsted, thirsted night and day,
 Until it seemed my soul must burst its bonds,
 In its mad yearning for the shining realms,
 The murmuring of whose founts I sometimes hear,
 The odor of whose flowers I sometimes breathe,
 Whose cool sweet breezes sometimes touch my brow,
 But whose dim shores have never, never yet,
 Burst on my straining sight, for all my prayers,—
 —Teach me but this, O love!—I ask no more,—
 But patience, patience, till I too may see!—

O my soul shall sing in seeing, love-light flash from out
thine eyes,

Like the pillar in the desert, when the sun first climbs the
skies!

I shall glory like the river, as it floweth to the sea,
When thou first, my loved ocean, spreadest out thine arms
to me!—

—But my soul stands mute and silent, waiting for the sun
to rise,
As the pillar in the desert, when the darkness fills the skies.

And I weary like the river, as it creepeth through the sands,
When it floweth slowly onward, over burning desert lands.

And I wonder night and morning, when mine eyes are first
to see,
Him who shall be night and morning, and the whole wide
world to me!—

I woke within the deepness of the night,
 And saw a figure standing by my side,
 The form of him, whose wife I am in dreams,
 The gaze of his deep eyes fixed on my face,
 As I had often seen him through long years.—
 And knowing how it never will be given me,
 That he may grow a living shape,—I cried,—
 —“O my beloved!—by all the happy hours,
 The sunshine of thy presence gave to me,
 By all the joyful visions that I built,
 By all the dreams I cherished ever vainly,
 By all the hopes that vanished as the years,—
 —I do beseech thee go from me e’en now,
 As thou dost love the peace of all my future!—
 —Go from me, though thy shadowy form has been,
 As the sole joy and comfort of my life,—
 Go from me, while my bidding yet may be
 A voluntary sacrifice to God,
 While yet I may renounce thee at my will,
 Ere yet the years shall rob me of thy presence,
 Making sharp disappointment doubly bitter!—
 —For O I know as sure as death is sure,
 Thy shadow form shall never grow to life,

And clasp me to a living throbbing heart!—
 —Go from me then, to nevermore return,
 So long as life shall last, O my beloved!”—
 —But yet he moved not, standing by my side,
 The gaze of his deep eyes fixed on my face,
 As I had often seen him through long years.
 —“And am I then to hope, O love?”—I cried,
 —“And is thy staying a sweet prophecy,
 That we shall sometime, sometime meet, my love?—
 —Tell me!—And when and where!?”—

He answered not,
 But from his lips there broke a smile so sweet,
 It filled the darkness round with beaming light,
 And raising his right hand, he pointed out
 Into the heavens, and through my tears I saw,
 The earthly skies with all their stars grow dim,
 And stretching far, rise to my straining sight,
 The shining shores of wide eternity!—

O thou my oak beloved,
 My proud, my noble tree!
 How long must yet I wander,
 Ere thy broad crown I see?—

The tall plants in the forest,
 Stand fresh, and green, and bright,
 And yet I seek thee only,
 O thou my sole delight!—

The bird sings in thy branches,
 I would that I might be,
 Or yet the low brown fern-leaf,
 That nestles at thy knee.

Or yet the tender leaflet,
 With blossoms fair and sweet,
 That with its small arms clasping,
 Twines loving round thy feet.

To watch the red sun noontide,
 The silver stars by night,
 Steal through thy whispering branches,
 O thou my sole delight!—

O thou my oak beloved,
 My proud, my noble tree! !
 How long must yet I wander,
 Ere thy broad crown I see!—

"ICH DIEN'."

I will follow thee to the battle,
O'er long and toilsome way,
And carry thy shield and thy javelin,
In burning heat of day.

I will kneel in thy tent at midnight,
And wash thy weary feet,
I will lull thee to sleep with stories,
And singing low and sweet.

I will lie and list to thy breathing,
Nor sleep shall touch mine eyes,
While thou dreamst of glory and triumph,
And stars shall fill the skies.

I will call thee soon in the morning,
Before the early dawn,
I will bring thy sword and thy helmet,
And gird thy armor on.

In the bloody fray of the battle,
I shall not faint nor swerve,
O grant me, my love, but forever,
The priceless boon,—to serve!—

DORNROESCHEN.

HER soul like to the Princeess was, of old,
That had been slumbering full a hundred year,
With hedge of brier grown round the castle-hold,
And purple flowers to hide each pointed spear.

And many a knight had come from distant lands,
To win the maiden for his beauteous bride,
But all had fled away with bleeding hands,
And broken-hearted for their love had died.

For one alone the thorn-bush was to part,
And let him in without or smart or strife,
One only was to wake her dreaming heart,
And kiss her lips, and gíve her new-born life.—

—So stood the flowers, and shed their perfume round,
And waited hundred years from day to day,
Till of their breath no longer trace was found,
And hedge and castle crumbled to decay.

THE NUN.

THE day is here, the night has passed away,
 The sun has risen now,—
 He drew the veils from off the purple hills,
 And kissed them on the brow.—

He came with all the splendors that he wore,
 In thousand years of old,
 He crowned the blushing earth his radiant queen
 With flashing gems and gold.—

Down in the village there awakes again,
 The busy hum of life,
 But up to me there comes no faintest sound,
 Of human stir and strife.

For on the cool, eternal heights I dwell,
 Where pain and death are o'er,
 And all that moves the hearts of men below,
 Can touch my soul no more.

Sweet love to shine on me from some dear eyes,
 I never yearn to see,
 Nor yet to feel a child's breath on my lips,
 For God is all to me.

For mine is all that calm and rest divine,
 That peacefulness complete,
 Of those who die, and know the earth shall fade,
 A shadow 'neath their feet.

For thousand times the sun shall rise and set,
 The sea roll on its flood,
 And through all change I know, eternally
 I am as one with God.—

THE DEFORMED.

I know it all, I know it well,
 My lowly garb of earth,
 I like to Cinderella's gown,
 Who sat beside the hearth!

The buds and birds, the brooks and flowers,
 And every shimmering star,
 They tell the joyous, joyous tale,
 How well beloved they are!

How well beloved, how truly loved,
 For all their beauty rare,—
 But who will e'er love me, love me,
 Who never shall be fair?—

What fairy good, what fairy kind,
 Will change me at a breath?—
 —I know thee well, O fairy sweet,
 Thy homely name is death!—

Some time, some hour wilt come to me,
 Some happy, happy night,
 And touch me quick, and clothe me quick,
 In shining robes of light!—

O fairy kind, O fairy sweet,
 I wait beside the hearth,
 For thee to come and take it off,
 My lowly garb of earth!—

LOVE is not for me,
 With all its deep delight,
 Turning to spring the winter,
 To shining day the night!—

But great desires are mine,
 And an immortal aim,
 And mine perchance the glory,
 Of an undying fame.—

Mine is no cheery hearth-fire,
 With all its joys complete,
 But mine a home eternal,
 At God's beloved feet!—

WOULD some great passion came to move my soul,
 E'en like the storm-wind shakes the forest tree
 Or tosses high the billows of the sea,
 To teach me that I live and have not died.

I cared not whatsoever then betide,—
 If shattered be the tree, or when or where
 The waves be dashed and scattered into air,—
 For I would die to know that still I live!—

I know that powerless is my strain,
 And naught my words forever,
 That all my songs shall be in vain,
 And useless all endeavor.

For there where time and death shall cease,
 Within the dim tomorrow,
 My spirit dwells in godly peace,
 And has forgotten sorrow.

And what the lips may speak of woes,
 Of human joys and laughter,
 The spirit heedeth not which knows,
 The calm of the hereafter.

DWELLING apart through the long silent years.

I know that I have sung a deeper song,
Than all who chanting in the market-place,
Draw round about an eager, gaping throng,
Too easily moved to laughter or to tears.—

No noisy praise, no triumph or applause,
Broke in an hour upon the peace divine
Of my communion with the great Beyond,
Won me a single instant to decline
From the pursuit of my immortal cause.—

What though no tongue shall ever sound my name,
On my forgotten grave no bry be grown?—
—The knowledge I have sung that deeper song,
Unheard, uncherished, save by God alone,
Were sweetest joy, and most undying fame.—

PERCHANCE that sometime, when the eloquent lips
 Now sing so passionate song, have long grown cold,
 And the cheeks white, and the hot heart stands still,—
 Perchance then sometime shall the selfsame strains
 Die now unheard upon the winds of heaven,
 Make other hearts throb high, and young cheeks flush,
 And lips flow over with the praise of him
 Whose life-blood pulses in them.—Then perchance,
 When that the eyes that glory most had gladdened,
 Have long lain covered o'er with blinding dust,—
 His name be blazoned in full noonday glory,
 And hailed with loud acclaim by all the nations,
 And so be known at length the patient toil,
 Of those long, silent, unrewarded years.—

ALONE.

RISE up my soul, and gird thee round with strength,
 A strength unbending, merciless and hard,
 Like tempered steel!—a strength dare flag and faint not,
 Howsoe'er fierce the sun, how mad the storms
 Shall vex unceasing the long, thorny path,
 Thou, O my soul, must travel!—For alone,
 Alone as a proud, desolate tree, that rears
 Its towering head to the wide heavens, implanted
 On a bleak rock, drawing with painful toil
 From a hard soil too barren to bring forth
 Aught friends or brothers round him, nourishment
 Sufficient to sustain his mighty heart,—
 —Alone as the bold eagle, winging sunward
 Unto the flaming King of Day, through heights
 Unfathomed, his swift flight,—perceiving 'neath him,
 But bare, brown rocks, or endless fields of snow,
 Cut sharply 'gainst the skies' unclouded blue,—
 Alone as they who die, and see the sun-light
 Fade from the flashing river, and the love-light
 In dear eyes pale, through their own dimming sight,
 And with their feeble, broken hearts travailing

In the last pangs of earth, their souls grappling
 With the first agonies of sudden freedom,
 Ignorant if the gray shadows that enfold them,
 Be the last twilight of this fleeting world,
 Or the first dawn uncertain, of another,—
 Do trembling grope their passage through the dark,— —
 Must thou, O soul, fight the sore fight!—uncheered,
 Unhelped, yet never weary, to the end!—
 —O soul forsaken, whose hard lot was cast,
 In an ill time, that bears nor flower nor fruit!—
 —Yet rise, O soul, and gird thee round with strength!—
 —Take heart and comfort, O my soul!—perchance
 That from the bosom of the tearful night,
 The mortal struggle, is thy portion now,—
 There shall be born the crimson morn divine
 Of a new, glorious day,— the shining dawn
 Of that more happy age, that fuller life,
 The thirsting world has waited for so long!—

MARCH 26th, 27. I.

THE chords are rent, the golden lyre is broken,
Whereon he smote with so supernal might,
Power so all tender, sweetness so all strong,
The boundless ocean held its seething breath,
The eternal stars stood still in deep of night,
To listen to his song!—

The song he sang in so most witching strain,
Of so immortal, godly majesty,
Our hearts suspended hung 'twixt smiles and tears,
Anguish and blissfulness, delight and pain,
In speechless ecstasy!—

—The chords are rent, the golden lyre is broken—
—Upon the barren shore disconsolate,
The boundless ocean murmurs ceaselessly,
The eternal stars move on through the wide heavens,—
And our own hearts, remembering it, vibrate
In death's sharp agony!—

MARCH 26th, 27. II.

"O how must the earth have sorrowed, and the heavens rejoiced when his soul took wing!"— *Old Story.*

REMEMBEREST thou, O earth !
 How an immortal heart,
 —This day, long years ago,—
 Cast off its mortal part,
 Broke at death's icy touch,—
 And hid'st 'neath wintry snow,
 Thy bursting buds in sorrow?—

Rememberest thou, O sun !
 How a deep, patient eye,
 —This day, long years ago,—
 Turned upward to the sky,
 Was quenched forevermore,—
 And veil'st thy noonday glow,
 'Neath stormy clouds in sorrow?—

—Ye, O great heavens, remember,
 How an immortal soul,—
 —This day, long years ago,—
 'Mid the fierce tempests roll,
 Passed through your shining gates,
 Undying life to know,
 In God's eternity!—
 And let the noonday sun,
 Burst through your stormy frown,
 His shining beams rain down,
 And kiss the joyous earth,
 In boundless ecstasy!—

MARCH 26th, '27. III.

IN the tossing tempest he bid thee,
In the flaming storm, our God!—
Thee, that wast cradled in tempests,
Thee, that wast nurst in storms!—

On the rushing wings of the whirlwind,
He called thy soul to Him!—
Thine, that hast wrestled with life and with death,
And that hast vanquished them both!—

—Like to the white-winged dove above the waters
Breaking in frenzy 'gainst the starless heavens,—
That soared through all the gloom of fearful night,
Unerring to its mark,—

So rose thy song triumphantly above
The long, hot desperate frays of life, unheeding
The darkness, and the maddened winds and waves,
Straight to the throne of God.—

So rose thy soul victoriously above
 The short, sharp, hopeless fray with death, dismayed not
 By all the shadows of the unknown path,
 Straight to the heart of God.—

On the wings of the rushing whirl-wind,
 He called thy soul to Him,
 Thine, that hast wrestled with life and with death,
 And that hast vanquished them both!—

GIVE me a friend, ye gods, !—
 To laugh with me,
 To weep with me,
 All my life's treasures keep with me !—
 Who needs not words of common speech,
 The deep wants of my soul to reach,
 But reads with one glance of her eyes,
 The long night spent in tears and sighs,—
 —To whom all pain and joy be known,
 By my heart-throbs against her own !—

Give me a friend, ye gods !—
 To love with me,
 To pray with me,
 In storms and sunshine stay with me !—
 —With me all bitter cups to drain,
 That through her love hold less of pain,
 To know me in each changing mood,
 E'en then when barren solitude,
 Were sometime dearer unto me,
 Than e'en her blessed company !—
 —Give me a friend, ye gods, !
 To live with me,
 To die with me,
 And life and death defy with me,—
 Send such a friend, sweet gods !—

TO ———

O love, my heart had come to thee,
 Whatever land, whatever sea,
 Had parted thy dear soul from me! *Old Song.*

AND had I put my heart in the ground,
 Like a sprouting seedling, true and sound,—
 It had crept to thee,
 Wheresoe'er thou mightst be,
 And were it earth's furthestmost end,—
 And sprung and blossomed a noble tree,
 At thy blessed door, my love, my friend!—

And had I cast my heart on the sea,
 Like a stately ship most fair to see,
 It had sailed to thee,
 Wheresoe'er thou mightst be,
 And were it earth's furthestmost end,—
 And cast its anchor most gallantly,
 At thy blessed feet, my love, my friend!—

And had I flung my heart on the air,
 Like a shining bird of plumage rare,
 It had soared to thee,
 Wheresoe'er thou mightst be,
 And were it earth's furthestmost end,—
 It had flown to thy bosom to nestle there,
 Forever and ever, my love, my friend!—

TO THE SAME.

MY heart is as a temple, sanctified
 By him, whose blessed image there is worshipped,
 And whose loved name on every wall inscribed.
 — And some among the pilgrims pass the portals,
 Of all the throng the tide of life sweeps by,
 Stop in their course to gain an entrance there.
 — Some pause upon the step, some cross the threshold,
 Some at the inner doors stand still, a few
 Pass down the silent aisle, to halt beneath
 The fretted arches, or the starry dome,
 And fewer still approach the altar bright
 With the eternal lamp, and dim with incense
 Rising into the skies forever, veiling
 From mortal sight the image hung above,—
 — And one perchance, across the cloud sometimes
 Caught a faint glimpse of the blessed features, shining
 In quiet greatness there, and deathless glory.—
 — But into the heart of the temple,
 Into the Sanctuary's own,
 Into the Holy of Holies,—
 Thou hast entered alone!—



Joy!—thou who akin to love dost make,
 All earth to blossom with perpetual spring,
 Our hearts to throb with fuller, sweeter life,—
 Bearst us aloft upon thy shining wing,
 Unto the very gates of heaven itself,—
 —Wherefore so utterly,
 Hast thou forsaken me?—
 Did I not give thee welcome in my soul?—
 Was it so long the abode of bitter sorrow,
 Darkened for so long, solitary years
 With all the heaviness of unshed tears,
 Thy tender life, prospers but in glad day,
 Faded and perished in that twilight gray?—
 —And yet, O Joy!—is there not sunshine there
 Enough to make it thy eternal home?—
 —Have I a friend not, O sweet Joy,
 What though she dwell beyond the sea?!—
 Have I a love not, blessed Joy,
 What though he dwell beyond the stars?!—
 —Is not earth beautiful, and summer come?—

Wherefore may I not sing,—
 I, whose full heart should rise
 With gladder hymns into the radiant skies,
 Then any warbling lark upon the wing,
 In praise of Him, that day and night
 Gives all delight,
 That unto me has given,
 The richest treasures and of earth or heaven?—
 —O Joy, sweet Joy!—I conjure thee,
 Come back to me!—
 Make earth to bloom with but an hour of spring!—

O soul, my soul!—from what more passionate star,
 Hast thou been exiled to this colder earth,
 That all its beauties serve but to recall,
 The brighter splendors, the unfading glories,
 Of thy eternal home?—
 That laughter means not mirth, nor joy delight,
 And love shall never know contentment here,
 And hope is but an ever-fleeting shadow,
 And life not life, but only death as life,
 Death shall lead onward through unfathomed darkness,
 To that eternal home?—
 —Wherein hast thou offended, O my soul!
 That the dim vision of that eternal home,
 —Remembered not, yet unforgotten,—falls
 Thus like a shadow o'er thy sunniest dreams,
 A blight upon the fairest flowers of fancy,
 Mingles with every cup a drop of marrah?!—
 —That passion and desire should be consumed,
 In the great, burning thirst unquenchable,
 For that eternal home,—
 Where joy shall mean delight, and hope fulfillment,
 And love shall find its measureless content,
 And life is everlasting ecstasy,
 And death less than an unremembered dream!—

TO ———

W

HEREFORE, thou Strange, thou Great, thou All-
Compelling,

Didst thou come into my calm life?!—like to
A shining meteor rise upon my sky,
In whose red light must pale and fade away,
The peaceful stars, gleamed ever there on high,—
A storm that sweeps across the trembling earth,—
A fire-brand flung upon my quiet hearth,
Startling my days unruffled course, into
Feverish unrest, and passionate desire!—
For the deep magic of thy voice and eye,
The power of but thy presence near, has kindled,
In all my veins a fierce, consuming fire,
Whose glow naught can extinguish nor allay,—
Filled all my heart with a great thirst and hunger,
Whose nameless cravings naught can satisfy,—
Sent a hot arrow quivering to my soul,
That rankles there, until I may not say.
If 'twere more tolerable to endure
The mingled joy and pain to gaze on thee,
Or the yet sharper, deadlier agony,

To go from thee, and turn my face away,
 And dwell apart from thee forevermore,
 Till I too proud and great to bend a knee,
 Unto the mightiest King e'er wielded sway,
 Would follow thee on foot a willing slave,
 To earth's most distant and most desolate shore!—
 —O thou All-irresistable!—wherefore
 Didst thou thus plough and harrow up my spirit,
 Shake all my being to its inmost core,
 Uproot and rend it from its wonted centre,
 The aim and purpose made it strong and whole?!—
 —And yet my storm, my flaming heavenly light
 From out the deepness of that very soul,
 Where the sharp arrow rankles ceaselessly,
 Do I thank Him, the God of Heaven, Who sent
 Thee unto me!—For the great burning fire,
 The thirst and hunger that consume my heart,
 Are yet more gladness, and more deep delight,
 Than perfect health and power, and the content
 Of fulness, wholly satisfied!—And not
 For all the treasures of the land and sea,
 Would I renounce one pang endured for thee!—

TO THE SAME.

THOU shalt remember, thou shalt not forget me!—
 'Mid all the heat of day,
 My image suddenly,
 Like a faint spectre gray,
 Shall in thy sight arise,
 And fix on thee grave, earnest, searching eyes,
 And fill thee with a sense of strange unrest!

And when the world's loud, bustling sounds are hushed,
 In the lone dark of night,
 'Twill stand thy couch beside,
 Instinct with life and light,—
 And starting from thy dream,
 Roused by the radiance of the unwonted gleam,
 Thine eyes shall close no more all those long hours!

Thou shalt remember, thou shalt not forget me!—
 For when thou seest me,
 My gaze shall read thy heart,
 My lips shall speak to thee,
 Of every agony
 E'er shook thy inmost life, each ecstasy
 Was of the deepest secrets of thy soul!—

I shall pursue thee, haunt thee, follow thee,
 And morn and eve and noon,
 Tracking thy every step,
 Beneath or sun or moon,
 Till knowing me a part
 Of thine own self, thou clasp me to thy heart,
 And hast forgotten thou couldst e'er forget me!—

NOT when the flower is fresh, and fair with dew,—
 —Not when the proud sun blazes in deep noon,—
 Nor yet when rounded to its perfect fuiness,
 Hangs in the cloudless heavens the silvery moon,—

Not in the flush of joy and godly triumph,—
 Not when thine eye shines, and thy heart throbs high
 With life and hope, and soars the earth beyond,
 And would exultant storm the very sky,—

—When the long shadows fall, and the pale moon
 Is in its wane, and the flower hangs its head,
 And thy heart pulses sluggishly again,
 And life means day and night, and hope is dead,
 And eyes grow dim with secret tears unshed,—
 —Then shall by some strange, fitful, dark decree,
 Thy soul's deepest desires be granted thee!—

TO C. S.

HOW should I know, how could I tell,
 O thou, my love of other days!—
 I loved thee still so passing well,
 That but thy voice, a word from thee,
 Could shake my spirit to the core,
 Thrill it with all the ancient spell!—

—How could I tell, how should I know,
 That at a touch of thy dear hand,
 From out the smitten rock should flow,
 Long pent up 'mid the ice and snow
 The chilly years have gathered there,—
 The waters warm as long ago?—

That the old wound should bleed again,
 The old hot tears start forth anew,
 That what in sight of God and men,
 I fancied dead and buried long,—
 The golden dreams, the smiling hopes,
 Should press about me bright as then?—

O had I known how sharp and sore
 The unrest would be, now stirs this heart
 With all the images of yore,—
 I'd heeded well not recklessly
 To trouble all those quiet graves,
 To call thy memory back to me,
 O thou, my love of other days!—
 That canst my love be nevermore!—

“And as he rode into the courtyard, he found his love dead. — And he turned his horse’s head, and sped away, no one knew whither.” *Old Story.*

I gallop the wide world o’er and o’er,
I gallop forever and evermore!—

Through the deepest sea, and the longest land,
Through the burning heat of the desert sand.

Through the deadly moor and the dreary fen,
Through the mighty wood and ghostly glen.

O’er plains in the twilight, where I see,
My horse’s swift shadow before me flee.

Through the silent streets, when the moon shines bright,
Of populous towns in the dead of night.—

—I gallop the wide world o’er and o’er,
And find my love never and nevermore!—

And the surging waves of the mocking sea,
And the leaves of the forest, laugh at me!—

“Thy love lies deep in the still, cold ground,
And on earth shall never again be found!”

But I know she loved me too tenderly,
To have left me thus, and forsaken me!—

And I'll seek my dead love the wide world o'er,
If I galop forever and evermore!—

ON thy flowery meads and meadows, thy green fields, **O**
nature blest!

Let my sore feet, travel weary, cease their wandering, know
of rest!—

Lave my hot wounds at thy brooklets, cool my brow with
thy soft breeze,

Lull me into dreamless slumber, with the whisper in thy
trees!—

Suffer all my restless spirit, fretted by a thousand ills,
Taste of the sweet peace, forever breathes from thy sunlit
hills!—

Make me strong as thy broad rivers, roll their courses to
the sea,

Great as thy majestic mountains, changeless as eternity!—

FAREWELL, sweet fields, steeped in deep, golden sun-
 Bathed in the shimmering freshness of the dew, [shine,
 Rich with brown clover, and the white-starred daisy,—
 Filled with the hum of the first early bee!—
 And you wide-spreading trees, rearing your heads
 Aloft, in speechless yet most close communion,
 To the more eloquent skies cloudless above you,—
 And you, great, silent, purpling hills, mute links
 Between the earth and heaven,—and you dreamlike,
 Painless existence full of vague delight,
 Where the faint warbling of the joyous birds,
 The low, clear murmur of the shadowy brook,
 Does soothe with a deep, infinite sense of rest,
 The fevered pulses of too rapid life,
 The panting heart's great unquenched thirst, the soul's
 Unceasing hunger for immortal deeds!—
 That life again with all its fretful toil,
 Its jarring tumult, its unending strife,
 Its heat, its weariness, its dark despair,
 Knocks at the gates of my scarce slumbering heart,
 Calling it back into the thickest fray.—
 —Farewell, sweet peace!—Yet welcome, godly battle,
 Thou that dost crowd into one flaming day
 More of eternal life than shall be known,
 In thousand years of that untroubled peace!—

O to o'erleap in one bold bond sublime,
 The gap of the tomorrow,—now divides us
 From the most glorious sum of our long strife,
 The hottest battles noblest consummations!—
 —To press into one throb the slow pulsations,
 That bear the tides of this too sluggish life,
 Out into spaces of unmeasured time!—
 —To crowd into one burning, flaming day,
 Between the rise and setting of the sun,
 All passionate desire, all great performance,
 All godly deeds that shall perchance be done,
 Through the long future years,
 In pangs and agony,
 In dark despair and tears,
 Were now consumed in the great fire divine,
 Of this one moment's immortality!—
 —And with the gathering night lay down to rest,
 In a deep, dreamless sleep of vague delight,
 Knows of no waking more!—O such a day,
 Were life in truth, and death not such a night!—

INRI.

SONNET.

AT noon dark night had fallen in heaven on high
 The blood-red sun hung, but no light was shed,
 Upon the earth below, silent and dead
 The distant City lay beneath the sky.
 —The leaves and blossoms drooped in burning heat,
 No wind rose, and the heavy air was still;
 All men had trembling fled from off the hill,
 Save She who wept beneath the Saviour's feet.
 —No sound, save of the drops of purple blood,
 That fell from out his wounds upon the ground,
 Thirsty and parched, in slow, unceasing flood.
 —No whisper in the trees; but suddenly
 There came a cry, piercing the darkness round,—
 —“My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me!”—

MOZART.

THOU on whose radiant brow the flush of youth
 Unfading shines, through all eternity—
 Thou that art like a blushing morn in spring,
 'Neath whose first kiss a thousand blossoms burst,
 A thousand birds awake to joyous carols
 A rosy sunrise, telling heaven and earth—
 Of the rich, golden summer-day beyond,
 —Lovers that wander 'neath the silvery moon,
 'Twixt tears and smiles, 'twixt joy and yearning, hearkening
 Unto the witching tales their own soul whispers
 Of love's infinite promise of delight,—
 Shall sing thy praise while hearts yet throb with life!

HAYDN.

Thou on whose cloudless brow the milder light
 Of manhood beams, through all the future years—
 Thou that art like a mellow autumn eve,
 In whose brown leaves and purple tints are bound
 A thousand recollections of bright summer—

A golden sunset giving kind assurance
 Of cheery winter-nights beside the hearth,
 Lovers that sit within the ruddy glow
 Of their own fire-light, with clasped hands, and eyes
 Tell the unspeakable contentment found
 In the fulfillment of love's infinite promise—
 Shall sing thy praise while hearts yet rise to God!

BEETHOVEN.

But thou upon whose stormy brow there burns
 Undimmed the light of Heaven, while God yet lives,—
 Thou that art like the night with all its stars;
 In whose mysterious shadows lie enfolded
 A thousand morns of spring and autumn eves,
 A thousand summer suns, and winter fires,
 Within the deep of whose unfathomed heart,
 The anguish and the ecstasy, the hopes
 And prayers, the joys and tears of all mankind
 Pulse secretly—oh, who shall sing thy praise?
 Before thy soul's immortal majesty,
 Speech dies in silence, and the lip grows dumb!

"WHERE SHOULD THE SCHOLAR LIVE?"—

WHERE should the soul of the poet dwell!—
 —Where the icebergs rise 'neath the sombre sky,
 And the reindeer skims o'er the frozen snow,
 And the North-light flashes and flames on high?—

In the far-off East, where the slender palm,
 Stands dreamily whispering by night and day,
 And the pyramid on the yellow sands,
 Tells of thousands of years that passed away?—

In the blessed clime, where the sun shines mild,
 And the ruder blasts of the North are still,
 And the corn-fields wave in the evening breeze,
 And the purple grape grows ripe on the hill?—

On the stormy waves of the boundless sea,
 Where the shimmering pearl, and the coral sleep,
 And the mystic murmurs of ebb and flow,
 Sing of the wonders that rest in the deep?—

—Nowhere in the world, shall his glorious soul,
 Like an earth-born bird, fold her shining wings,
 But float like the spirit of God o'er the deep,
 And hover above all beautiful things.—

CALL ye this life?—this sweet providing for
 The daily wants sustain our mortal part,
 The tender care the mother gives her child,
 The blest communion of heart with heart,
 The ties infinite fine, and yet resisting
 The iron hand of death, that do unite
 And man and wife,—all the untold delight,
 Flows out from all the thousand springs of love?—
 —Or yet this basking in green, sunlit fields,
 This drinking in with craving soul and eye,
 Forever satisfied, yet ever thirsty,
 The hills and valleys, earth and sea and sky,
 All countless glories, wherewith earth is starred?—
 —Or yet even the sacred fires enkindled by
 The thought of freedom,—of the blood and tears,
 Those went before us in the long, gray years,
 Poured freely out to win that priceless boon?—
 —Ay, call ye life all this, though it be great?—
 —I tell you all earth's glories soon or late,
 Shall crumble to decay, and be no more;
 Love dies, and sacred fires to ashes fall!—
 I tell you that but we, who lend to all
 A living voice, who do perceive and note

Each feeblest stirring of the pulses, each
 Faint flutter of the heartstrings, and the soul's
 Most tender thrill, and yearning most remote,—
 —We, who do follow up life's wondrous course,
 To its most secret, most mysterious source,
 Its deepest waters,—watch and do record,
 Each light and shadow quivering o'er its surface,—
 —We, whom was given the godly gift of speech,
 Whom the all-merciful God granted the word,
 The power of song,— —I tell ye that but we,
 Know what is life, and what eternity!—

IM wedded to the Muse, my Sweet,
 I'm wedded to the Muse!—
 And did aught other lover come,
 I'd entrance him refuse,

Into the heart that's guarded, Sweet,
 By gate, and bolt and bar,
 By fosse, and wall and turret high,
 Looks o'er the land from far!—

And did he force a passage in,
 By arts or swift or slow,
 I'd pray the Lord deliver me,
 From so most deadly foe!—

For I'll be parted nor cut off,
 Divided nevermore,
 From the sweet Muse, my hope, my life
 My lover forevermore!—

TO THE MUSE.

I have a friend, so fair, so passing fair,
Naught in the world compared to her from far,
Her sweet eyes shine like a benignant star,
And made of fine-spun sunbeams is her hair!—

Sometimes I find her walking by my side,
Out in the noisy world, the bustling mart,
But loves she best, when that I dwell apart
In utter solitude, with me to abide.—

But at all hours,—in the dark, starry night,
At flaming noonday does she come to me,
And every hour of her sweet company,
Is fullest joy, exceeding deep delight!—

For she doth soothe all pain, bind up each wound,
And without her, life were a burden, great
As the sore cross, beneath whose crushing weight,
He toiling up the hillside sank and swooned!—

And I do love her above everything
Of earth or heaven!—and when I feel her kiss
Upon my earth-born brow, so rapturous bliss
Floods all my soul, I hear the angels sing!—

SONG.

TRUST me not, love; I am but fickle, fickle!
 'Too easily turns my soul's swift-changing hue;
 I cannot long be constant, kind or true!
 Tender, or proud and cold,
 Fiery, and young or old,
 Filled or with hopes or fears,
 Laughter or bitter tears,
 My heart is tossed by every passing breeze!

Now, at high noon, I love the crimson rose,
 But ah, alas! who knows!
 If ere the starry night please me not best
 The golden-hearted lily's pallid crest!

This hour I'd joyful lay me down to die
 For a dark lustrous eye;
 The next may all my heart be stormed and won
 By some blue violet hiding from the sun.

To-day I treasure high proud liberty,
 To-morrow may find me
 The willing vassal of some mighty king,
 Holding his glory dear o'er everything.

Ah ! now I love thee with consuming fire.
 Now, in the dewy morning's early ray ,
 But who may tell, if not ere close of day,
 Before another morn,
 Hot vows be pledged and sworn,
 Eternal faith, my sweet,
 At other, dearer feet?
 Trust me not, love ; I am but fickle, fickle !

T

O sadness is my soul attuned,

To sadness!—

No more a single chord may thrill,

To gladness!—

—I know not wherefore, O but joy is flown!—

No comfort more from aught, these tears

May borrow!—

To fears the hopes are turned, that smiled

Tomorrow!—

To twilight gray the golden sunshine grown!

To silence the sweet birds that piped

So cheerily!—

Faded the bright-hued flowers I loved

So dearly!— —

—I know not wherefore, O but joy is flown!—

WHAT strange, dark fate, what starless lot, ye gods,
 Has evermore been mine!—
 Where I have loved and worshipped, where my soul,
 Kindling with fire divine,
 Thrilled to undying words, immortal deeds,
 And I in ecstasy,
 My hot heart on my lips, cried out,—“Lead me
 To them, revealed to me
 The imperishable glory of the Godhead,
 Let me haste speedily,
 To clasp their blessed feet, kiss their loved hands!”—
 I e’er was answered with a pitying smile,—
 —“Nay, foolish child, in vain!—the feet you’d clasp
 This hour long, long ago,
 Have done their weary pilgrimage on earth,—
 Long the dark earth below,
 The hands you’d kissed are crumbled into dust!”—
 And silent graves, moss-grown in long, gray years,
 Was all I found of them, through bursting tears.—

FRIENDS.

CLASPING each others hands in this dark hour,
 Like timid children wandering through the night,
 So let us seek the face of God together,
 That surely like the moon behind black clouds,
 Somewhere must shine, with sweet, benignant light!—

—Kissing each others lips, yet other hour,
 Like weary children lay us down to rest,
 Knowing our way not, but yet full of trust,
 Sometime the night will pass, the golden morn,
 Flood the glad earth, from sea to mountain crest!

AYE, let my soul go free
 Of each particular tie that ever bound it!
 Untrammelled as the everlasting sea,
 Rolls on from shore to shore,
 Tosses its angry billows to the skies,
 At rest and smiling lies,—
 Unfettered as the mighty winds of heaven,
 Roam all the wide world o'er,
 A rushing tempest bearing certain death
 Or gentle breeze, their breath,—
 But as may please their own proud sovereign will,
 Heedless, defiant of all earthly law,
 Subject to no command,
 No beck of mortal hand,
 Obedient to the voice of God alone,
 When he may choose to bid them: "Peace be still!"

Not that this heart ne'er knew
 The thrill of tenderness, the glow of passion!—
 Nay, verily, but all too oft, I too
 Tasted love's ecstasy,
 Its bitterness and anguish and delight.—
 Him, that for supreme right,
 Justice and freedom, made his noble life
 One long, immortal plea,—

Him, that in the great realm of song and sound
 Rules as a king encrowned,—
 Her, whose proud, quivering lips and magic eye
 Tell of all tears and smiles, despair and hope,
 All joys and pangs and smarts,
 Ever moved mortal hearts,— —
 All these I loved with a consuming fire,
 A love I fancied ne'er could pale and die.

And they dropped from me all,
 Those great, immortal loves, like leaves in autumn,
 Grow brown and sere, and overripe must fall,
 Leaving me 'neath the heaven
 Barren and cold, and yet content the spring
 Surely new buds must bring,
 Shall in their turn unfold and grow and perish,
 And by the winds be driven.—
 So let my soul go free forevermore!
 Know bonds of love no more,
 Save those, my earliest love, bind me to thee!
 Thee, whom I ever held close to my heart,
 To whom through every other chance and change,
 All frail inconstancy,
 All dark disloyalty,
 I yet was faithful with unswerving passion,
 Thee, O sweet Freedom, worshipped Liberty!

— 'S LAMENT.—

ART, Art, thou that art long mine own no more,
 Thon, that wast wont to be mine all of yore!—
 Life of my inmost life, my hope, my god!—
 The sun and stars whence warmth and light were lent
 The darkest, chilldest hours earth ever knew,—
 My daily bread whence I drew nourishment
 Sustained me evermore,—the golden wine
 Wherefrom my soul drank in the breath divine,
 Imperishable immortality!—
 I have forsaken thee, renounced, denied thee,
 Like he who cried, he knew his Master not!— —
 —O Art, Art, Art!—a boundless agony,
 Does rend and tear my spirit at the thought!—
 An anguish sharper than most cruel death,
 When I do pass the sacred temples by,
 Where thou dost dwell in silent majesty,
 Where I too might have ministered to thee,
 Thy holy priestess and thy votary,
 Had I not left thee thus!—

And wherefore, wherefore!—

—O for a mortal love, an earth desire,
 Have I surrendered, yielded, sacrificed,

The immortal passion, the great heavenly fire,
 Once bound my soul to thee!— —
 —O surely, surely, 'twas not well!—surely
 'Twas an ill day, and a most starless hour,
 The day and hour when he first came to me!
 With his soft voice, his presence's witching power,
 First wooed and won my bleeding heart from thee,—
 With the dark glow his eyes poured into mine,
 Made me forget thy starry gaze divine!—
 —Yet not forget!—Nay, nay, I ne'er forgot thee,
 Never forgot thee wholly for an hour!—
 —Not even 'mid the rapture of his kiss,—
 Not even in that night of consummate bliss,
 Saw the fulfillment of this broken dream,—
 —Rich with the intoxicating breath of summer,
 Roses and snowy blossoms, and the gleam
 Of golden stars,—when he first called me wife!—
 —For through it all there went an aching memory,
 A sore remembrance of my deepest life,
 Held more of full contentment than all this,—
 The hours divine when I communed with thee!
 —Not even then, when in the course of years,
 Sweet, prattling children gathered at my knee,
 Whose loving arms were twined my neck around,
 Who called me mother, and whose eyes laughed at me.
 —For O did the small mortal forms, so soon
 Taken from me, and laid in the dark ground,
 E'er fully, wholly cut off every thought

Of the proud shapes, the shining images,
 Had sprung perchance from out a soul,—a fire
 With but the godliness of great desire,—
 Instinct with life, and proved perchance immortal!—
 —Nay!—through it all there went a hungry craving,
 A thirst unsatisfied, unquenchable,
 A nameless yearning Art, for thee!—through all
 Thy haunting, everpresent, voiceless shadow,
 Fell like the chill and darkness of a pall,
 Between the brightest sunlight and my soul!—
 —And now they've left me all,—he too, he too,
 Who won my heart from thee!—I am alone.
 —Above their silent graves the spring-winds moan,—
 I that forsook thee, stand myself forsaken!—
 —And now at last would I come back to thee,
 Art, Art, my first, my last, my only love!—
 But now I know that thou wouldst turn from me,
 Hiding thy face!—for these poor hands employed
 But in the petty cares make up our day,
 Have long unlearned their wonted skill and cunning,
 Could not the spirit's promptings more obey,
 Even could that broken spirit yet conceive
 Immortal thoughts!— —
 —O Art, Art, Art!—surely the agony
 Of death were sweet, beside the boundless anguish,
 Burning, unceasing, hopeless, without end,
 That rends and tears me at the thought of thee!—

NOT in sorrow, not in sadness,
 Not in lays of fitful gloom,
 Do I sing thy deepest praises,
 Glorious land beyond the tomb!—

But in faith and hope and trusting,
 But in joy and deep delight,
 Land that grows more bright each morning,
 Nearer draws with every night!—

To whose measureless contentment,
 All the earth-joys ever won,
 Are but as the dawn's first promise,
 To the splendors of the sun!—

YE gather round your hearth-fire's cheery glow,
 Content to know that love and peace and plenty,
 Dwell 'neath your happy roof and ask no more,—
 But I, consumed by a great thirst and hunger,
 No comfort at your bounteous board may still,
 Turn from your doors, to where I see on high,
 The fires celestial blaze against the sky.—
 —What though black tempests burst upon the paths
 Lead to the heavenly peaks, upon whose top
 Those beacons flame, unquenched, unquenchable!—
 —What though wrapped round by storm and night, I lose
 The shining footprints of those Godly Ones
 Walked here before me, clothed with power divine,—
 What though ere half the dizzy height be scaled,
 The shadows gather, and the starless night,
 Knows of no flush of dawn, comes on, and I,
 A weary, footsore pilgrim, by the way
 Do faint and fall, to nevermore rise up—?!—
 Shall I rejoice not loudly, thinking on
 The uncrowned greatness of my soul's desire,
 The glory triumphless of my endeavor,—
 Shall I not smiling die, remembering
 To perish like a god were higher bliss,
 Than live a man, ignorant of such defeat,
 With all of Paradise spread at his feet?!—

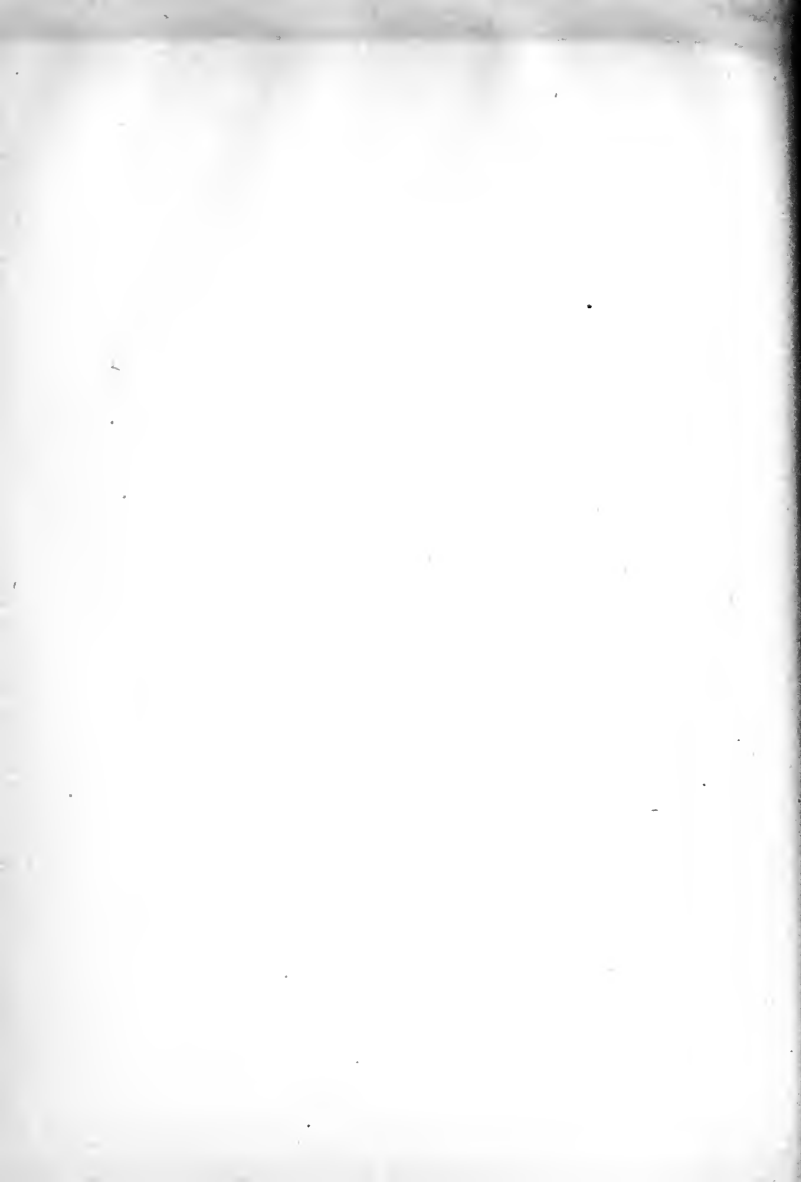
THE MUSE TO HER ELECT.

66 **A**ND tearless pain, and speechless agony,
 Shall be your portion, my Anointed!—ye
 Upon whose brow my kiss shines like a star,
 Whose gleam perchance shall be the only light
 To guide ye oft, through the long, darksome night!

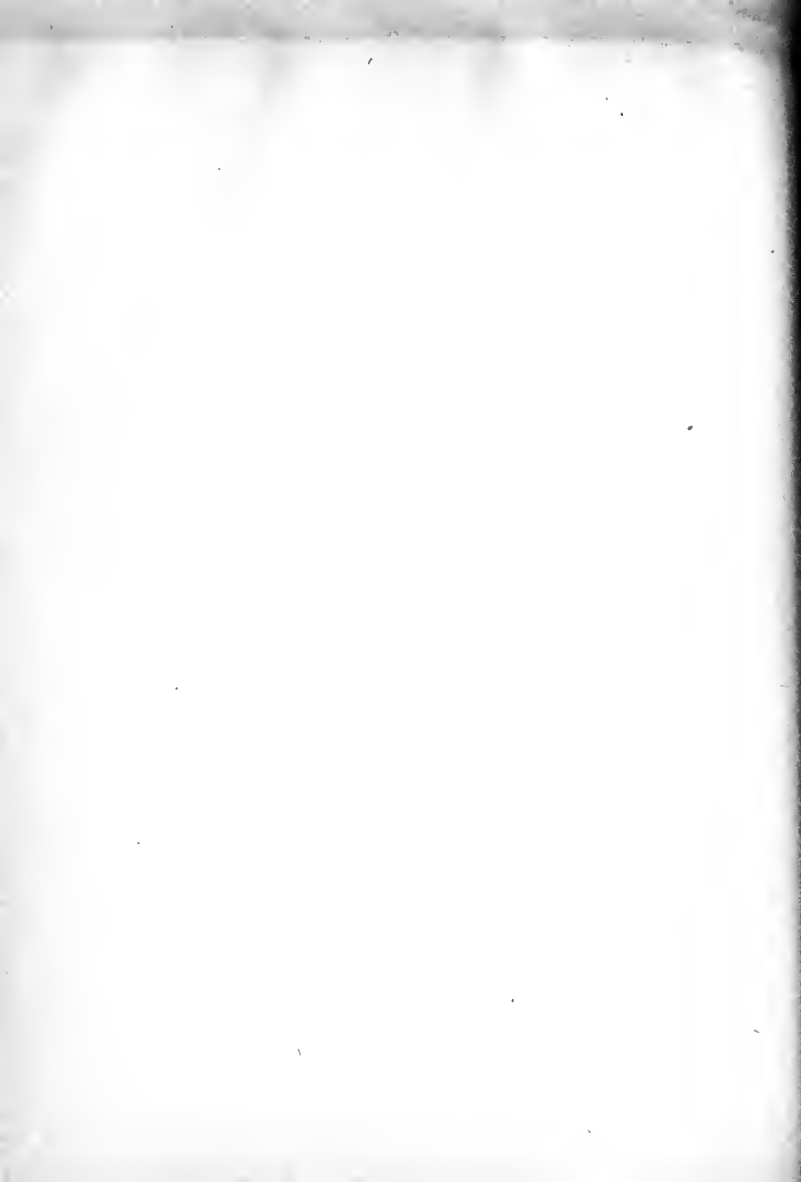
For sometimes through deep shadows, whence no ray,
 Shall give aught promise of faint, struggling day,
 Sometimes 'neath the fierce arrows of the sun,
 In whose great noon-heat ye shall droop and faint,
 Deathless yet dying, without sigh or plaint—
 Shall ye climb upward to the starry heights,
 Whereto your weary feet, bleeding and sore,
 Unresting yet are set forevermore!—

Nor joy nor comfort shall with ye abide,
 And hope shall die, and love shall be denied,
 No cheer shall blaze upon your desolate hearth,
 Exiles and outcasts shall ye walk the earth!—
 And men shall mock and sneer, and call in vain
 Your noblest efforts, and most kingly deeds,
 Till you shall question if the trembling star,
 Be God's own gift or the dark curse of Cain!—

—Ye my Anointed shall endure for me,
 All tearless pain, and speechless agony,
 —Shall ye not chide me, curse me in your souls ?”—
 —And echoing through the ages from afar,
 Burst a great cry from the white lips of those,
 Upon whose brow her kiss shines like a star,—
 —“In tearless pain, and speechless agony,
 We praise and bless thee through eternity !”



TO J. L. M.



THOU who hast made so noble plea for freedom,
 Uttered for her words so all great and true,
 That, were she dead, roused by thy clarion notes,
 Her pulses vivified would throb anew—
 That, bursting the gray tombs, hast bid the dead,
 Slumbering long ages the dark earth below,
 Cast off their cerements, and come forth and walk,
 Not as pale, flitting shadows, nay, aglow,
 Instinct, afire with light and life and power,
 Of flesh and blood, with hotly-throbbing hearts,
 And love and hate, do battle, bleed and perish,
 Play o'er again the good and evil parts
 Were once assigned them here beneath the stars,
 At whose command arise again, all gay
 With ancient splendor, loud with bustling traffic,
 Cities and towns long crumbled to decay,—
 Thou, the deep magic of whose voice, drawing
 Or tears or smiles from us, as pleaseth thee,
 Has charmed and thrilled and borne aloft my soul,
 Till it, so bound, shall nevermore be free,—
 Who hast been with me amid pangs and pain,
 Who wast my solace, and my hope and stay,
 When darkness and despair seemed closing round,

My friend and comforter, in many a day
 When life grew heavy and the wide world dim
 To me, who wearied of unceasingly
 Whispering to my dead love, whose dumb ears hear not,
 Whose mute lips have no answer to make me,
 Saw none but thee to cling to 'neath great heaven.—
 How may I thank thee, tell thee, as were meet,
 The homage of my soul is thine, my heart
 Blesses the very shadow of thy feet?

SONNET.

ACROSS the deepness of the tossing sea,
I reached it out to thee, my timid hand,
—O thou who in a far-off, foreign land,
Hast raised thy voice so well for liberty!—
—And now, alas! I fear me much, my heart,
Like to a roving bird upon the wing,
Flew after it, and a wild, willful thing,
Refuseth evermore from thee to part!—
—And thought of thee grew so all great and strong,
My soul shall nevermore know aught content,
Till it may breathe its secret in a song,
Till in some word its deepest thrill be spent,
Till in some accents such as these, I tell
Thee loudly that I love thee, and how well!—

SONNET.

I know not if I love thee, but I know
That at fresh morn, fair with gold light and dew,
When every quickened sense seems born anew,—
At close of day, in the sun's fading glow,—
Beneath the stars, when the dark, hallowed night,
Spreads out her solemn glories o'er the earth,—
At the glad eve, beside the cheery hearth,
Blest with its own ineffable delight,— —
Whene'er my spirit tastes most deep content,
My thrilling soul with sweetest joy expands,
Or upward soars, to God's own firmament,—
—My o'erfull heart goes out to thee, my hands
Clasp both thine own, and 'neath thy quiet eye,
All other images grow pale and die.—

I know immortal and imperishable
 Is the undying soul, the godly essence,
 The spark divine that moves and animates
 This mortal frame, this form of earth, what though
 Like a frail vessel made of clay, containing
 Some exquisite perfume, that no lapse of years
 Can weaken or destroy, that form itself
 Must burst and break, and crumble into dust.—
 —And thy proud soul,—O thou couldst prove to me
 All joy, all measureless content, this spirit
 May yet conceive, and grasp, and cherish!—thine,
 Whose noble frame, by the great fire that ceaseless
 Burned on the sacred altar of thy heart,
 Has feeble grown like to a delicate shell,—
 Perchance yet more imperishable than
 The souls of thousand others born to die,—
 —If that the Lord whose breath is Justice, thus
 Suffers aught difference in our finer substance!—
 —And yet but through the frame that perishes,
 But through those outward signs that pass away,—
 —The deep look in the eye, the hands warm pressure,
 The voice that thrills with the great life within,—
 The eye that breaks in death, the hand grows cold,

The voice that dies upon the barren air,— —
—May the immortal soul be known, to our
Dull earth conception, our blind mortal senses!—
—And so I pray thee go not from us yet,—
Rest here yet with us for a little time,
Where we may see and know thy soul!—Not yet
Shroud thee in the eternal dark and silence
Of that impenetrable, starless night,
Where we can see no dawn and no awakening!—
—Not yet launch forth on that dim, boundless sea,
On whose gray shores we stand and vainly strain
Our tearful eyes, to catch a glimpse of them,
Are drifting out to mystic, unknown regions!—
—Rest with us yet a time, where we may hear
Thy noble words, and feel thy presence near,—
The presence makes all earth-joys more complete,
The burden of our own lives passing sweet!—

WHAT pangs and perils may encompass thee,
 And close thee round,—
 Were thy great heart,
 Already touched by grim, old Death, himself,
 That held thee bound,—
 As surely as it knows the God above,
 My soul doth know,
 Thou canst not die,
 Leaving the dark world darker for thy going
 Ere thou and I,
 Have sometime met the friendly stars below!—
 —Ay it is written in the smiling skies,
 We once shall gaze into each others eyes,
 Shall clasp each others hand,
 In some all-blessed land,
 Beyond the sea!—
 Remorseless death turned from thee, paled and vanished,
 Before the coming of my hastening feet,—
 For nor my life nor thine shall be complete,
 Ere our souls' separate fire,
 Once to the heavens may spire,
 In one great flame!—

GIVE me thy hand, in this dark hour!—thou whom
 All my whole deepest soul yearns to call friend!—
 That its dear living touch may lend me strength
 To find my path again,—my way to wend

From out this labyrinth, this misty maze,
 Where my bewildered spirit dimly gropes,
 Seeing no issue, where risen from their graves
 The ghosts of my long-buried dreams and hopes

Come pressing round me in a countless throng,
 Reaching out towards me,—and I recognize
 Familiar faces in the pallid shadows,—
 Yet now no longer in their vacant eyes

Is there aught meaning for me,—and shuddering
 I turn from them, tossed between joy and tears,
 Gladness of my proud freedom, and mad yearning,
 For the sweet slavery of other years!—

Give me thy hand!—that thrilled by the fine fire
 That stirs thy pulses, lifts thy noble frame ,
 Above the ills of frail mortality,
 My heart may kindle with a kindred flame!—

Give me thy hand!—help me onward and upward,
 Unto a higher love, a purer light!—
 Guide me till that my erring feet perchance,
 May sometime climb thine own, proud, starry height!—

W

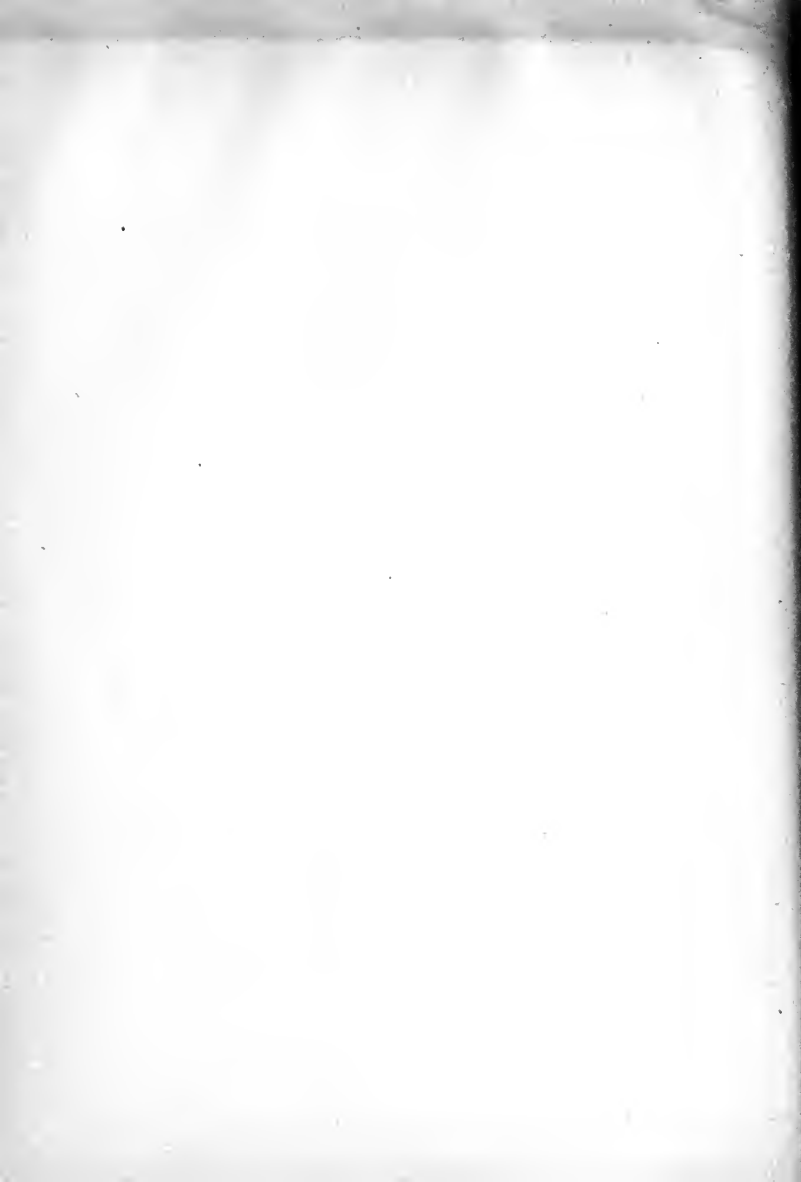
HAT may I say to thee?—whose eloquent voice
Shaming my own poor song, makes me rejoice
And grieve, in one,—rejoice that such as thou
Still walk the earth, and grieve my proudest flight,
Must ever soar below thy greater height,—
—Yet is joy fullest, so well love I thee!—

—What may I give to thee?—who stirred in me
The love of mankind and of liberty,
To new, triumphant, and undying flame,—
Who hast enriched me for all coming time,
With the deep treasures of thy soul sublime,
The choicest blossoms of thy noble art!—

—What may I be to thee?—who many a day
Wast more to me, than mortal tongue can say,
Wast that gave strength to live, and power to battle!—
—May I not sometime grow unto thy heart
A slight necessity,—a needful part
That never found, left thy life incomplete?—
—Help thy declining strength, and our sad fears,
With the full vigor of my younger years,—
—Not from the richness of my summer lend
Aught to thy autumn?—prove,—O thought most sweet!—
Sometime perchance, thy well-beloved friend?—

IS then the generation lives and moves
 Today on the wide earth, a race of pigmies,—
 Are men so small then, or am I so great,
 Or formed of clay is so much finer, filled with
 An essence so much subtler than their own,—
 —Or wherefore does my spirit wander 'mong them
 Like to a stranger,—like an exile from
 Some far-off region!?—Wherefore does my soul
 With hot desire, yearning unquenchable,
 Reach ever backward to the golden past,
 To the Undying Dead, the Great Immortal,
 Who lived and loved and suffered long ago,—
 Feel itself more akin to their mute shades.
 Than all the hearts this hour pulse with warm life-blood?—

Nay friend, forgive the sigh, the unjust charge
 Against the age,—unjust while thou yet livest!—
 — I was deceived,—not every glory, not
 All greatness has departed from the earth,
 While God shall grant that thou mayst walk it!—thou
 Whose shining image sole 'mid living men,
 Pales not before the shades of the great Dead!—
 —I found thee,—looked on thee,—gave thee my heart,
 Felt the warm pressure of thy living hand,
 And knew my soul had found a home at last,
 And was content to live among the living!—



CORNELIUS.

J'étais bien aimé d'elle, et plus que jamais son époux; elle était l'épouse de lui avant son voyage en Italie. Arrivée à Vienne, elle cherchait moi pleurant, mais je la méprisais.

L. VAN BEETHOVEN, in his "*Litres de Conversation*."

The morning sun had long been up, and flooded
 The world with rosy light, and now a beam
 Scaling the castle-wall like some bold lover,
 Stole through the half-drawn curtains to the room
 That from afar o'erlooked the sea's blue line,
 And as it struck the mirror, bounded back,
 Half-frighted thus to see its own bright image,
 Crept onward then, more timid to the bed,
 And lost itself an instant 'mid the ringlets
 That, like spun-gold lay on the snowy pillow
 And clustered round the sleeper's brow: then touched
 Her eyelids closed, and yet she wakened not,
 But slumbered on, as in the tale of old
 The princess fair, who slept a hundred year,
 And only when the king had kissed her lips—
 A royal lover he indeed, the sun!—
 She smiled within her dreams, and smiling woke.
 O joyous dream, and yet more joyous waking!
 And could it be it was not all a dream—
 The last sweet night, with all its happiness,
 Whose memory was more golden than the sunshine?
 Could it be true that he, whose melodies
 Were wont to shake the very hearts of men,
 Who heard the glorious harmonies of heaven,
 The morning-dawn of whose young, rising fame

Flung open wide to him the shining portals
 Of palaces and courts through all the land,—
 Had stooped in love to her the earthborn child?
 O it was bliss so measurlessly deep,
 It almost broke her heart like some great sorrow—
 And with her white arm pillowed 'neath her head,
 She lay and thought of how it all had been,—
 How he had frowned and said, "Not here! not now!"
 When she had asked that he might play to them
 The tunes the gods had given to him that day,
 Then turned his back and swiftly disappeared
 From out the shining circle of the guests
 That thronged the halls, and came to grace the feast,
 Where she had reigned the queen and brightest gem,
 And wore, to please her noble Countess mother,
 The gift Count Prosper once had brought for her,
 The shimmering necklace of great precious pearl,
 A burning star of diamonds in the midst,
 And said that on each pearl there hung his heart.
 How that Count Prosper's arm had whirled her on,
 All through the gay night, in the airy dance;
 How he had pledged her health in sparkling wine,
 A secret meaning in his handsome eyes;—
 But how at length, when all the guests were gone,
 Count Prosper, too, who lingered last of all,
 Waved his last, long farewell, and rode away,—
 Her soul had yearned to see Cornelius' face,
 And hear his magic touch upon the keys,
 Even as the faint hart thirsteth for the spring
 That sends the life-blood rolling through his veins,
 And she had strayed into the shadowy park
 To seek him, if she wandered all the night,
 Or to the furthest ends of all the earth,
 And found him by the gleaming lily-lake,

That deep and still lay in the forest's heart. —
And he had long and wondering gazed at her,
Then said at length,—“You, Countess Giulia, here!”
And suddenly sprang up and seized her hand
With so firm grasp she well nigh had cried out,
And drew her on in breathless, hurrying haste
Back to the castle, dark and silent now.
Only a moonbeam, stealing through the window,
Fell on her throat and made the diamonds flash,
And he flung off her hand from him, and cried—
“Put off that trinket now, for love of me,
If that may be, as for the love of him
You wore it all the day!” And she attempting
With hasty fingers to unclasp it swiftly,
Gave half-impatiently so great a pull
The slender thread was snapped that held the pearl,
And down they rolled unheeded and were lost
Within the broad, black shadows on the floor.
And he, with half a smile, seized both her hands
In his, for one short instant, as he cried—
“I thank you, Countess!” Then he turned from her,
And, hastening to the opened instrument,
His fingers woke the silent keys to life,
Breaking the voiceless stillness of the night.
And while she listened breathless to the sounds
That ebbed and flowed and sank away again,
Like a sea thundering on a barren shore,
With dancing sunbeams on the rolling waves,
She knew that in the throbbing, passionate chords
It was his heart that spoke to her of love.
And when he ceased, and bowed his upraised head,
She did not speak; but when he suddenly
Sprang up, and stood before her, with a cry
She flung herself into his willing arms.—

If all the stars fell down from out the skies
 In one gold shower—if it was they who sung,
 Or in the bush outside the nightingale;
 If the earth vanished from beneath their feet,
 And they were borne up through the sounding skies
 Unto the shining throne of God,—or aught
 That happened after, she remembered not.—

So she sprang up like some swift-footed fawn,
 And waited not until her maid should come,
 But tied the dainty slippers to her feet,
 And threw the cloudy robe about her form,
 And swept the golden ringlets from her brow,
 Then drew the curtain from the opened window.—
 The balmy air swept by, and nodding in,
 Hung the white roses full of sparkling dew,
 And breaking one to fasten in her hair,
 Her eye swept o'er the landscape far around.—
 How calm the sea to-day! She scarce perceived
 One wave, white-crested, breaking at the crags
 That jutted out above the purple depths.—
 Where was he now? For he was wont to rise,
 Since that he was their welcomed, honored guest,
 E'en with the morning's lark, and wander off,
 No one knew whither, nor for how long time,
 Perchance to find beside the sounding sea,
 Perchance amid the mountain's darkest files,
 The tunes that made the angels laugh and weep.
 There, on the left, gleamed, just discernible,
 Count Prosper's castle, and the world would talk,
 And wonder why he took no pretty mate
 Unto his gilded nest, and why he filled
 His solitary halls with all the splendors
 That art and taste and untold wealth could dream,

And never yet had brought him home a wife,
 When e'en the proudest lady in the land
 Had been content to reign the noble mistress
 O'er the estates and in the heart of him
 Who was so young and handsome, and could trace
 The long line of his shining ancestry
 Back full three glorious centuries and more.
 And there were other whisperings in the air,—
 That there was one he long had loved and wooed,
 Yet that his suit but little favor found.—
 And, tossing back her head that the gold ringlets
 Danced round her brow, and from the rose all dew
 Showered down in shimmering drops, she tripped away.

How flew they by, the golden hours and days,
 And sweeter nights, when she would early steal
 Up to her chamber, waiting breathless there
 Till all the house was still, and then glide out
 And meet him waiting at the garden gate,
 And roam with him beneath the shining moon,
 Through fields and woods, and by the sounding sea,
 He ofttime humming loud the tunes he said
 He found within the deepness of her eyes,
 Oft not returning till the pale, gray dawn
 Crept upward in the skies and quenched the stars.
 O for such hours of night she well could bear
 To have Count Prosper by her side each day,
 And see Cornelius not through all the time
 The sun moved onward in his shining track.
 Though sometime in a sunny afternoon,
 The while the Countess slumbered for an hour,
 And easily missed her daughter's company,
 She slipped away and went in search of him,
 And found him always, wheresoc'er he wandered,

Doubting not some good angel led her steps.—
 So had they climbed together, one sweet day,
 A beetling cliff that overhung the sea,
 And lost together in sweet talk and tunes,
 Had not perceived dark clouds were coming up,
 That hid e'en now the bright light of the sun,
 And only gazing downward at the waves
 That muttered with low threatening far below,
 And foaming broke against the barren crags,
 Did they behold the tempest close at hand.
 "My love! a storm is brewing right above
 And we are far from home. Come! let us hasten
 To find some roof to shelter thy loved head.
 For me, I oft have braved the angry skies,
 And care not for their scowls."

"Nor I, Cornelius.

Give me protection in thy sheltering arms,
 Close to thy heart, what tempest should I fear?
 What thou hast braved, let me brave with thee now!"
 And, even while they spoke, a lurid flash
 Shot from the black clouds piled in threatening mass,
 And a fierce gust cut sharply o'er the cliff,
 Piping above the thunder's sudden roar.—
 And so, his sheltering cloak thrown round them both,
 His one arm clasping her beloved form,
 The black clouds ever lowering from the skies,
 Until they wrapped them round as with a pall,
 That hid the sea from sight, they stood and watched
 The tempest growing louder and more fierce,
 From moment unto moment, till it seemed
 The earth was rent asunder in its fury.
 And while the forked blue lightnings played around,
 And once a flash went shivering down before them,
 That clove the seething ocean to its depths,

And the wild whirlwind whistled round them both,
 Tossing her golden locks through his dark hair,
 While the cold drenching rain swept over them,
 And they heard sometimes, through the thunder's roll,
 The roaring of the sea beneath their feet,—
 They laughed like merry children at the storm,
 And called to him in scornful merriment
 To do his worst.

“And what, love, if he should?

And sent e'en now some swift-winged flash to us,
 That bore our souls away,—love! shouldst thou fear?”

“O! welcome life or death, or heaven or hell,
 So that I be with thee, with thee!” she cried.

“And what if, clasped within each other's arms,
 We flung ourselves into the furious sea,
 And left behind us all the pangs of earth,
 To be united evermore in death,
 And never parted through eternity,—
 Wouldst thou have courage thus to die, my love?”
 And a strange light gleamed in his shining eyes,
 As he bent over her to read her face.

But her lips paled not at his passionate glance,
 As she cried out,—“I will, I will, e'en now!—
 Hold me but close in thine embrace, O love!”
 And drew him forward to the cliff's sharp edge.

“No, no! O my immortal love,—to live,
 To live, and not to die, our love was given,
 God wills us not to die just yet, just yet!”

So, lifting her an instant in his arms,
 He bore her backward from the dangerous ledge.
 And, with her nestling closer to his heart,
 Like some sweet, timid bird, they waited thus
 In silence for the passing of the storm.
 And only once, as some great sudden gust

Swept by, he asked,—“Didst thou hear nothing, love?
 It seemed to me that on the wind there came
 A distant cry for help from out the deep!”
 She shook her head. “Some sea-gull’s scream, perchance,
 Breaking his wings against the hurricane.”
 “God help some, poor, unhappy mariner
 Tossed in the storm!” he said, and then was silent.
 And so at length, the tempest’s fury calmed,
 The winds were lulled, the gushing rain grew still,
 The black clouds broke and rolled far out to sea,
 And, smiling through sweet tears, the sun burst forth.
 Only the ocean would not yet be hushed.
 They heard its angry thunders on the shore,
 As now they left the crag, and, hand in hand,
 Sought over rocks and stones a homeward path,
 Hastening their steps to gain the Castle soon,
 Ere the dark night should cover all the land.

“My daughter,” said the Countess, towards eve,
 “Lend me your arm and walk with me awhile,
 Yet not outside, but in the large cool hall,
 Where hang the portraits of your ancestors.”—
 So they paced up and down the marble floor,
 Silent at first, the setting sun’s red gleam
 Slanting through the tall windows at each end.
 Then, as her gaze glided along the walls
 O’er all the stately knights in glittering steel,
 Their trusty swords clasped in their daring hands,
 And o’er the stiff-ruffed ladies in brocade,
 Pride in their eyes and on their handsome lips,
 And kingly falcons on their slender fingers,
 And came to one whose face was turned away
 Against the wall, as if with shame and grief,
 Giulia’s step halted, and she asked,—“My mother,

You never yet have told me why this picture
 Alone, among all these, must hide its face?"
 "Because alone among all these, my daughter,"—
 And as she spoke she fixed on Giulia's face
 A glance so strange that she cast down her eyes,—
 "The long line in whose veins flows royal blood,
 And who unsullied by a single stain,
 Had kept their honor for two centuries,—
 She brought disgrace upon herself and us,
 By wedding one beneath her noble rank.
 Alone and burdened with her father's curse,
 She fled from out the Castle one dark night.
 Where she has lived and toiled was never known,
 And only long years after came the message
 That she had died in want and poverty,
 Her beauty faded and her young heart broken,
 In some far distant corner of the earth,
 Spurned by all those who once had called her friend."

"And may I go and see her face, my mother?"
 "I like it none too well,—yet you may go,—
 But let not me behold it too my daughter!"
 And, covering up her eyes she moved away,
 While Giulia turned the picture from the wall. —
 A face like to her own, with golden hair
 Clustering in ringlets round the snowy brow,
 But O, about the smiling lips and eyes
 A mournful look of sadness more akin
 To tears than laughter, like a prophecy
 Of all the evil of the future years.
 "Her beauty faded, and her young heart broken!"—
 And loved not she, even as her heart had done?—
 "But thou wast brave to live through long, dark years,
 Through toil and want, for him thy soul had chosen!—

I love thee!"—And she kissed the sad, sweet lips,
 And took the rose from out her golden hair
 To fasten on the carving of the frame.
 But the pale flower, half-withered, hung its head ;
 And when she turned and hastened to the Countess,
 She saw it drop upon the floor below.
 "Ah, yes, thus heaven deals justly with all those
 Who strive or higher or lower than is their sphere.
 For 'tis our duty, like to those below us,
 To rest where God has placed us ; none may slight,
 Believe me, child, unpunished, Nature's laws!"
 The Countess said, and so they left the hall.

No walk to-night beneath the silver moon.
 Nor yet to-morrow, nor the day next that,
 For the bright heavens, as if in angriness
 They smiled so soon, grew full of storm again,
 And poured incessant rain from the gray clouds
 That heavily hung above the dripping earth.
 And Giulia wondered how she learned so soon
 To live without that one sweet custom, once
 The sum of happiness of all her days,
 Wondered she learned to live without his kiss
 Sometimes upon her lips, and his arm round her.
 Wondered she learned so soon to miss his face,
 And sit with patience at her mother's side,
 Through all the long hours of the day and eve,
 And why she shrank, half-timid from his glance,
 When in the halls somewhere they chanced to meet,
 And he, without a word, fixed his deep eyes
 Intent upon her, and then passed her by.

But yet at length the heavens grew bright again,
 And with the sun appeared Count Prosper, too,

Who many a day was seen not at the Hall,
 And now rode o'er in haste to ask the ladies
 To grace the shining feast he was to give
 In honor of his fortunate escape,
 When in the last great storm he wellnigh perished.
 His pleasure-boat upturned, his men were drowned,
 And he but gained the land and saved his life
 As by a marvel.

And they promised both,
 Much wondering at the adventure that he told,
 The Countess loudly praising the good issue.

"So what you saw has pleased you, Countess Giulia?"

Count Prosper asked, when, at the early eve,
 The proud feast over at his royal Hall,
 They galloped homeward, he and she alone,
 Behind the Countess' coach that went before,
 And now the swift-winged paces of their steeds
 Slackened an instant to more easy trot.

"So much, Count Prosper, I could think of naught
 Could make more perfect your most lordly mansion."

"Ah, I am much beholden for your praise!

And yet you are mistaken, Countess Giulia;
 One thing was wanting, and that one so precious,
 That were my floors inlaid with gold and pearl
 Yet would I be but poor without that gem!—
 Missed you not something at the glittering board?"

And from his eyes there shot a look on her
 Before whose fire she turned her head away.

—"Cornelius!" cried she, and stretched out her hands,
 As suddenly she saw him in the path

That ran beside the highway where they rode,
 Lost in deep thought, his eyes upon the ground.—

"Countess, I do beseech you, for this once

Let him go by unheeded!" cried the Count,
In passionate whisper,—“See, he hears you not!”
And with this seized her bridle.

And she yielded,
And flew with him full gallop down the road.
And so Cornelius, looking up at length,
At the loud clatter of the horses' hoofs,
Saw but a distant cloud of rolling dust,
That in the deepening twilight disappeared.

They said that he would die, the good old man,
Who twenty years and more had played the organ
Each Sabbath, in the little village church,
And now lay suffering on a bed of pain,
And left the holy service incomplete
Without the music of his skillful hands.
But, hearing of the need, the Countess begged
Cornelius would consent to take his place,
For once or twice, till the old man grew well,
And he most willing, promised he would come.

Down to the village had they gone at eve,—
The self-same Sabbath he had played in church,
Until the low roof seemed to stretch and swell
A mighty dome, that touched the very stars,
Until the dim eyes of old men and women,
That often nodded through the lengthy sermon,
Sparkled again as in years long gone by,
And the bright eyes of merry little children
Grew serious with a look of holy awe,
As unawares they folded their small hands,
And over cheeks flushed with the hope of youth,
Or wrinkled with old age and resignation,
The silent, glistening tear stole down unheeded,

And one old man said, as he passed the door,
 His face all radiant, as with some great joy,—
 “Yes, yes, good neighbor, you are right; some angel
 Came down from heaven to play for us to-day!”—
 —She who was called the angel of the sick,
 To take some strengthening cordial to the patient,
 And he to know the good old man, they said
 Wished much to see him once before he died.
 Yet almost mutely walked they side by-side,
 It was so long since they had talked together!
 Nor scarcely glanced into each other's face,
 It was so long since last their eyes had met!—
 And twilight gathered as they reached the hut.
 “Come in!” a faint voice cried, upon their knock.
 And so they entered on the small, low, room,
 Where, in the corner, stood a narrow bed,
 On which the old man lay, and, by the wall,
 A strange old spinet, with small, yellow keys,
 And round about, upon the floor and chairs,
 Lay scattered leaves of music.

“O, my son!”

Cried the old man, and let go Giulia's hand
 To seize Cornelius', and to hold it fast,—
 “And was it you who played this morn at church?
 Mine ears are aged, yet through the opened window
 Came, now-and-then, a snatch of such sweet tune
 I knew not were the sounds from earth or heaven,
 And thought I heard the angels calling me!—
 Play now for me,—it is so long a time
 I have not heard what makes my soul rejoice!”—
 And, lying back upon the pillow, weary
 With so long speech, he pointed to the spinet,
 And willingly Cornelius hastened there.—
 And Giulia, sitting by the lowly bed,

Saw through the dusk the old man's face grow bright,
 As the first sounds struck on his eager ear,
 And his aged, withered hands, clasped as in prayer,
 Tremble as with some power they too had known,
 And heard through all the sounds that filled the room,
 Breaking as with a light the darkness round,
 That spoke as of a soul that wrestled vainly
 With God and heaven, and the eternal fates,
 Yet in the greatness of its power divine
 Would conquer sin and death, and storm the skies,
 And burst the very gates of hell itself.—
 His breath came swift, as though his heart beat fast.
 And when the last sounds died upon the air,
 The old man rose and stretched his trembling arms
 And cried, in loud, firm voice,

“My son! my son!

I see a flaming halo round thy head!—
 The gods have kissed thy brow, and from thee streams
 A shining light that is to fill the world!
 I see it bursting on my dying sight,
 The glorious future, where thou rulest a king!—
 Come to me! Let me fold thee in my arms,—
 Me, the unworthy! and lie down to die
 Happier with touching of thy blessed hands!”

And Giulia saw how in a close embrace
 They clasped each other, he, the weak and old,
 Twining, like some frail tendril round an oak,
 About the young and strong.

And then Cornelius

Sat holding long the withered hand in his,
 And no one spoke, until the old man said,—
 “My son, but knowest thou that upon the brows
 Of those who wear the Saviour's shining halo,

There also rests the Saviour's crown of thorn?—
 That those who serve the immortal gods shall know
 All pangs and pains and sorrows of the earth,
 That make life bitter like to gall and wormwood?
 That cold and hunger, want and thirst, and need,
 Dwell with them 'neath the low roofs of their huts?"—

"I know it, father!"

"Even I, my son,
 Who, in my noblest efforts, ne'er was worthy
 To kneel before the shadow of thy feet,
 Have known the heavy burden of the cross,
 And what misfortune shall the jealous gods
 Reserve for him whom they gave half their power?
 I had once a beloved wife and child,—
 Perchance he might have now been like to thee,
 Had not God taken him away from us
 Just when his child-lips learned to speak our name;—
 And she stayed with me but a few short weeks
 After our little child was gone from us.
 She said she heard him call to her from heaven,
 And so her heart broke, her brave, faithful heart,
 That weathered with me all the storms of life,
 And she has left me all alone on earth.
 But I shall see them soon now, wife and child,
 I know I go to them ere many a day,
 And all this now is more than thirty year."—
 What more he said Giulia remembered not,
 But in her ear, like snatches of a tune
 She could not banish, ever hummed the words,
 "He had once a beloved wife and child!"
 Perchance she, too had once been beautiful,
 But, like a blossom by the storm destroyed,
 Died after years of toil and poverty,

"Her beauty faded and her young heart broken!"—
 And should she too grow like her? And far out
 In the dim future she beheld herself
 A sorrowful, pale woman, bent with age
 Before her time, and clustering round her knees
 A band of little children; on their faces
 The shadow of the pain and want that dwell
 Beneath the hut poor, low and dark like this,
 The shadow he, from off whose godly brow
 Deep lines of care had worn the kiss divine,
 Had not the power to banish any more
 With even his sweetest strains. Forevermore
 Against her closed the shining circles all,
 Where she had reigned the queen and brightest gem,
 Shunned by all those who once had called her friend,
 Her mother dead, perchance gone to her grave
 Breathing a curse against her only child.—
 And was this all?—these narrow, barren walls,
 That seemed to close her round as in a tomb,
 So weary life, with this its deepest joy,
 To be so near the lonely journey's end,—
 All that was gained by years of toil and strife?

And from the darkness into which she gazed
 With widely opened eyes, rose up before her
 Count Prosper's handsome face and smiling lips,
 And round about her sunk away the hut,
 And stretching wide she saw his lofty Halls,
 With light and fragrance filled, and shining splendors.

Far was the night worn when at length they closed
 The old man's door and turned their steps toward home.—
 Mute as they came they walked. The path was dark;
 No glow-worm flimmered through the sultry air,

No cricket chirped beside the lonely road,
 Silence and dusky twilight everywhere,
 Only the stars sent feeble glimmer down,
 And through the stunted willows at the brook
 The sighing wind crept, stirring their black leaves,
 That shuddered 'neath his breath, and, far away,
 Some desolate dog barked faintly through the night.—
 Were they themselves not shadows, steplessly
 Gliding together through the world of shadows?
 Had they not died long, long ago, above,
 And were they not their dim, mute souls alone
 That walked together now?—

And, thinking it,

Giulia crept shivering closer to his side.
 And he threw one arm round her, as he said,
 All his heart rising to his lips,—

“O love!

It is so long since I have held thee thus,
 As I would hold thee evermore through life,
 And through eternity beyond the grave!”
 And when she spoke not, said again,—

“My love,

And didst thou hear the old man's words and heed them?
 That those who serve the immortal gods shall know
 All pangs and pains and sorrows of the earth,
 That make life bitter like to gall and wormwood?
 That cold and hunger, want and thirst, and need,
 Dwell with them 'neath the low roof of their hut?
 And dost thou know the fate of those who link
 Their lives to him who bears the Saviour's cross?—
 That in the far, dim future years before us,
 Naught but the spirit of God may flash and flame
 Within our humble home, and comfort us,
 Naught cheer us but our great, undying love,

Through all the long dark winter nights to come!—
 Question thy heart twice ere thou answerest me,—
 Wouldst thou have courage thus to live, my love?"
 —And in the silence heard her heart throb loud,
 And waited till she might have questioned it
 A hundred times, and yet no answer came;
 Then asked again, his eyes bent on her face,
 He could not see for all the darkness round,—
 "My love, wilt thou not speak one single word?"
 —And yet she answered not, and yet once more
 He questioned her and yet her lips were mute.—
 And, hastening on, she slowly felt his arm
 Unloose its trembling clasp about her form,
 And, as they gained the Hall, he pushed her from him,
 And by the light that streamed from out the windows,
 She saw the deadly pallor on his face,
 As he the first to speak, said, —

"Countess Giulia,

Let us be parted even now and here,
 Never, so God wills, more to meet on earth!
 Long ere the morn I shall be far from here,
 And pray our paths may never cross again!"
 Then swiftly turned and disappeared.

"Farewell!"

She cried, and stretched her trembling hands, her voice
 Broken in sudden tears, —

"And goest thou thus,

Without one kindly word of sweet farewell?
 O, by the golden memories of our love,
 And by the cruel fate that parted us,
 Speak one more word,—return one instant more!"—
 But, as she waited breathless in the dark,
 She caught no sound except the moaning wind
 That shook the silent trees above her head.

The organist had died the self-same night,
 The stranger who had played for him in church
 Had been to see him. For some villager
 Who passed there near the morn had heard a cry
 Come from the lonely hut, and from the roof
 Saw a pale light rise upward to the sky,
 And, half-affrighted, hurried quickly by;
 And in the morning they had found him dead,
 A radiant smile upon his wrinkled face.
 And many wept to see the good old man
 Borne cold and lifeless to the little church
 That had so oft resounded with his music.—
 And yet ere long all mournful tears were dried,
 And none remembered more his lonely grave
 In some dark corner of the village churchyard,
 Where they had buried him.—

And for three Sabbaths
 All the whole village flocked to church, to hear
 The bans of Countess Giulia and Count Prosper,
 Whose wedding feast made all the village glad.
 And when they stood together at the altar,
 That had been hung all round with fairest flowers,
 A look of joy and pride was in all eyes,
 And it was whispered round among the throng.
 That for the distance of a hundred mile,
 And in the memory of the oldest people,
 So handsome couple was not seen again.
 Even the Countess smiled most graciously
 On all who humbly made her their salute.—
 Only the bride stood with her eyes cast down,
 And whiter than the blossoms in her hair,
 And pledged her faith so faintly only those
 Who stood the nearest heard her spoken word.
 And 'mid the throng of servants from the Castle,

Old Martin, who each night must make the round
To see that all was well about the Hall,
Shook his white head and dried his eyes in secret,
Looking at his young mistress and remembering
How late last night, in some lone corridor,
He saw the phantom lady, robed in white,
Was said to walk at midnight through the halls
When some great evil hung above the house,
And feared half to approach her, yet took heart,
Thinking it ill became his old white head
To dread a specter.

So drew near and saw
'Twas Countess Giulia gliding to and fro,
Her gold hair flying round, her pallid face,
Weeping so bitterly it might have touched
A very stone, and wringing her white hands.
And when she saw him coming, suddenly
She flung her arms about his neck and cried,
"O Martin, Martin, would that I were dead!"—
Then raised her head and whispered breathlessly,
"Say not you saw me here!" and slipped away,
And left him wondering.

And, remembering all,
Old Martin's heart would not grow young nor gay,
In all the pomp and splendor of the feast,
That lasted three whole merry, noisy days,
Nor when Count Prosper and his sweet, pale bride,
Went on their journey to some distant land
Beyond the mountains, where, the people said,
The sun shone ever in the deep blue sky.

Years vanished, and the glorious promise made
E'en by the dawn of his young, rising fame,
Had long burst into radiant, shining day,

And, wandering 'mid the busy streets at noon,
Or nightly 'neath the solitary stars,
His tunes were wafted by him on each breeze
Out from rich palaces, where delicate hands
Applauded loudly, from the lonely hut
Of some poor laborer, singing at his work,
Unheard of all but God.

And turning homeward,
Where no sweet wife made bright the cheerless hearth
And welcomed him with smiling lips and eyes,
And no sweet child sprang to his empty arms,
He sat and played through all the swift-winged hours.
And as his soul rose upward on the sounds,
And grew in godlike strength and heavenly power,
Until it burst all fetters of the earth
And cast behind all pain and heaviness,
From out the deepness of his soul he cried,—
“My God, my God, I see thy face divine!
Why should I miss the eyes of wife and child!”
Yet even as he said it felt a pang
Go through his heart, and covered up his face.

The drifting snow whirled through the silent streets,
Darkened with winter clouds and falling twilight,
When from his step passed some poor woman, happy
To bring her little ones at length the bread
She vainly strove to earn for them all day,
And blessing him that gave the means, and thinking
How anxiously they waited for her coming,
She hastened forward, but half-marveling stopped
To hear a voice call from some noble carriage
That halted at his door. From out the window
There leaned a lady beckoning with her hand,
Her young face beautiful, but deadly white

Beneath its hood of precious furs.

"Good woman,"

She sweetly asked, "where have you been just now?"

"Dear lady, with the kindly gentleman

Plays such fine tunes, and always helps the poor."

"Doth he? So he is good and pitiful?"

"Ah yes, dear lady! O, his heart is wide

For all the sorrowing and unfortunate.

Lord bless him for it!"

"O, my God, be thanked!"

And the poor woman saw the lady's eyes,

She marvelled looked so dim, as with much weeping,

Like those of women poorer e'en than she,

Whose huts were filled with misery and sickness,—

Kindle with sudden light.

"Ah! thanks to you,

Good woman, for your news: and here, take this,

And buy some present for your little children,

Are you so happy as to be a mother!"

And saying it, she dropped a heavy purse

Into the outstretched hand.

Then waved her off,

Refusing all her thanks. And while the woman

Went on her way rejoicing, she ascended,

With trembling feet, the stairs, with trembling hand

Knocked at his door, and heard him bid her enter;

But felt her heart stand still before the voice

Not heard so long, and yet so well-known once,

And paused a moment, gathering all her strength,—

Then opened and came in.

He sat at work,

And raised his eyes not from it to her face,

But only asked, "Who is it?" and she said,

"A beggar. I have met one at your door

Who said you gave her alms,—so I came too.”
 He looked up quickly, wondering at the sound
 Of the strange voice, that quivered as with heart-throbs,
 And, growing fainter, stopped then suddenly,
 As lacking power to speak another word.
 And shrinking back, like to a timid fawn,
 Before the glance that saw yet knew her not,
 She stretched her hands to him with sudden tears,
 And cried,

“Cornelius is she then so changed,
 So very changed thou dost not know her more;
 She who was once thine own beloved, thy Giulia?”

He sprang up, fronting her, and for an instant,
 Seized both her hands in his, as long ago
 Had sometimes been his wont in golden hours,
 While o’er his face there flashed a joyous light.—
 Then rapidly it faded; he let go
 Her clinging hands, and sadly shook his head.
 “Ah, no!” he said, “you are not she I loved!
 For my sweet love, my Giulia, golden-haired,
 Died long, long years ago!”

And then he asked,—

“What is it brings the Countess Prosper here?”
 “Cornelius!” cried she, and her faltering voice,
 Broken in sobs, grew strong with agony,
 “And is the love you bore me once so dead
 You have no other greeting for me now,
 When after long, long years, we meet again?
 Believe me, O, believe me, I am Giulia,
 She whom you loved, the golden-haired! See here!”
 And drawing down her hood she had forgotten
 That pain and grief had bleached the golden hair
 Before its time, and stripped it of all beauty.

And he half-pitying gazed, to see the ringlets
That once like gold threads fluttered round her brow,
Now smoothed away in long, gray, silver strands
About the pallid face, but did not speak.
And then she cried to him again,

“Cornelius!

O will you see me perish at thy feet,
And speak not one kind word before I die?
O, with the hope to see thy face again,
I kept my heart alive when it was breaking,
I steadied up my weary, aching feet,
That they might bear me till I reached thy door!
O, have they vanished all from out thy heart,
The golden memories of our happy love?
The night I found thee by the lily-lake,
When first our love was known unto us both,
The day we stood upon the beetling cliff,
And watched the storm that seemed to shake the world,—
Our wanderings 'neath the joyous, silver moon,
Oft not returning till the early morn’g.” —
“Go on,” he said, when suddenly she stopped;
“I do remember all,—and then the night
We walked together from the old man’s hut,
And parted at the Castle!” And his brow
Grew darker than the gloomy, winter sky.

Yet, when she with a moan like to a cry,
Clasped both her hands before her tear-stained face,
He said again, and now his voice was mild,—
“But all these things are of the long gone-by:
Why call up now the specters of the past,
That long lay buried in the dust of years?
What may be spoken now to make undone
What then was uttered? What shall now make whole

The broken circle of your life,—and mine ?”
 “One word from thee ! Say but thou lovest me yet !”
 She cried and flung herself before his feet,
 Claspings his knees ; “and all may yet be well !
 O hadst thou known the pain and agony
 That made life bitter like to gall and wormwood,
 Through all these weary years, from day to day,
 Thou wouldst not now recall what haunts my days
 And peaceful nights, like to some fearful specter !
 In our proud palace, neath bright Southern skies,
 I sat and shivered as in winter blasts,
 Before our shining, richly-laden board,
 I sat and hungered like some starving child.
 My heart was dying for the warm hearth-fire
 In that low hut thou once hast told me of,—
 Was dying for the sunshine of thy face,
 For one sweet sound from thy beloved voice,
 But take me now ! I will go with thee now,
 And welcome pain and need, and death and hell,
 To be thy wife, —thy servant !”

“Countess Giulia !

Have you forgotten that you gave your life
 Unto another ? That it ill becomes
 For you to speak, or me to hear such words ?”

“O I will leave him, whom my hand was given,
 But ne’er my heart, and who loves me no more,
 And follow thee ! or if thou speak’st the word,
 I will go back, and be a patient wife
 To him whose sight is hateful to mine eyes !
 But say thou lovest me with but a spark
 Of that great fire that once was as the sun,
 By which we numbered all our joyous days !
 O thou, whose heart is wide for all misfortune,

Whose door none leave with hunger and with thirst,
Deny not me, the poorest of the poor
That ever yet have pleaded at thy feet,
The one small grain of comfort that I crave;
Say by one single word thou lovest me yet!"

He shook his head.

"I cannot, Countess Giulia,
I cannot, by the living, truthful God!
Kneel not to him who is so poor himself
That he has naught to grant! Move not my heart,
Lest something stirring in its inmost depths,
Tempt me to say how much I pity thee!—
By the dim shadow of our bygone love,
Spare thee and me from this! Rise up!"

And broken

Like some fair blossom by the storm destroyed,
She rose and turned her footsteps to the door;
Yet when it closed behind her, paused a moment,
Lest he might call her back.—

But waiting breathless,
She caught no sound except the moaning wind,
That shivering wandered through the wintry streets.—

So their two lives moved onward, like two stars
Distant and far apart. Hers with dim light,
Like those whose rays still tremble down to us,
When ages back the star has long been quenched—
His in the shining splendor that shall deepen
Through all the coming centuries of time.

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